



# THE STRUGGLE FOR INDEPENDENCE

CARL BECKER  
GEO. M. WELCH

THE  
CHRONICLES OF AMERICA  
ALLEN JOHNSON  
EDITOR

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The struggle for independence

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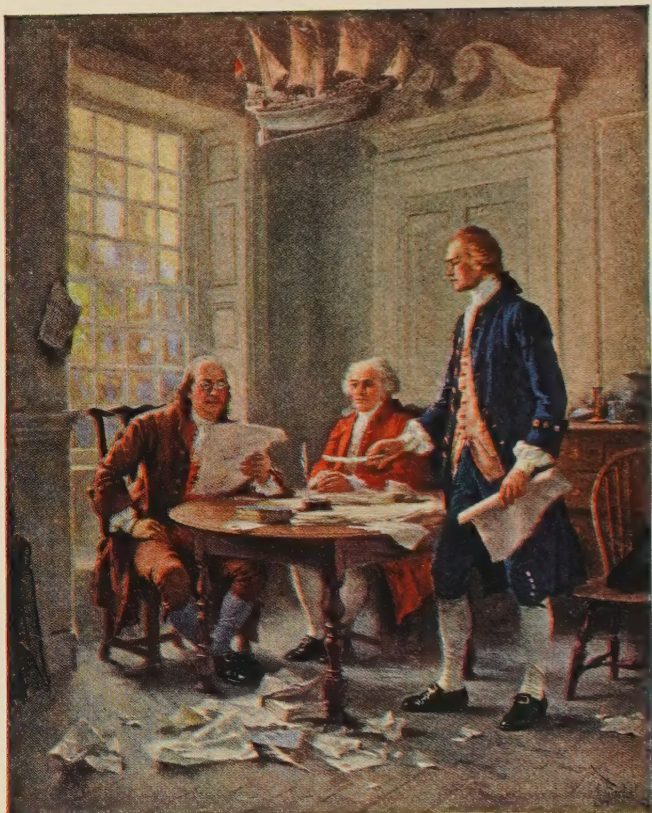
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FRANKLIN

JOHN ADAMS

JEFFERSON

# WRITING THE DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE

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# THE STRUGGLE FOR INDEPENDENCE

PART 1: THE EVE OF THE REVOLUTION

BY CARL BECKER

PART 2: WASHINGTON AND HIS  
COMRADES IN ARMS

BY GEORGE M. WRONG



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PART I

THE EVE OF THE REVOLUTION

A CHRONICLE

OF THE BREACH WITH ENGLAND

BY

CARL BECKER

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## PREFACE

IN this brief sketch I have chiefly endeavored to convey to the reader, not a record of what men did, but a sense of how they thought and felt about what they did. To give the quality and texture of the state of mind and feeling of an individual or class, to create for the reader the illusion (not *delusion*, O able Critic!) of the intellectual atmosphere of past times, I have as a matter of course introduced many quotations; but I have also ventured to resort frequently to the literary device (this, I know, gives the whole thing away) of telling the story by means of a rather free paraphrase of what some imagined spectator or participant might have thought or said about the matter in hand. \* If the critic says that the product of such methods is not history, I am willing to call it by any name that is better; the point of greatest relevance being the truth and effectiveness of the

illusion aimed at—the extent to which it reproduces the quality of the thought and feeling of those days, the extent to which it enables the reader to enter into such states of mind and feeling. The truth of such history (or whatever the critic wishes to call it) cannot of course be determined by a mere verification of references.

To one of my colleagues, who has read the entire manuscript, I am under obligations for many suggestions and corrections in matters of detail; and I would gladly mention his name if it could be supposed that an historian of established reputation would wish to be associated, even in any slight way, with an enterprise of questionable orthodoxy.

CARL BECKER.

ITHACA, NEW YORK,

January 6, 1918.

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# THE EVE OF THE REVOLUTION

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## CHAPTER I

### A PATRIOT OF 1763

His Majesty's reign . . . I predict will be happy and truly glorious. — *Benjamin Franklin.*

THE 29th of January, 1757, was a notable day in the life of Ben Franklin of Philadelphia, well known in the metropolis of America as printer and politician, and famous abroad as a scientist and Friend of the Human Race. It was on that day that the Assembly of Pennsylvania commissioned him as its agent to repair to London in support of its petition against the Proprietors of the Province, who were charged with having “obstinately persisted in manacling their deputies [the Governors of Pennsylvania] with instructions inconsistent not only with the privileges of the people, but with the service of the Crown.” We

may, therefore, if we choose, imagine the philosopher on that day, being then in his fifty-first year, walking through the streets of this metropolis of America (a town of something less than twenty thousand inhabitants) to his modest home, and there informing his "Dear Debby" that her husband, now apparently become a great man in a small world, was ordered immediately "home to England."

In those leisurely days, going home to England was no slight undertaking; and immediately, when there was any question of a great journey, meant as soon as the gods might bring it to pass. "I had agreed with Captain Morris, of the *Pacquet* at New York, for my passage," he writes in the *Autobiography*, "and my stores were put on board, when Lord Loudoun arrived at Philadelphia, expressly, as he told me, to endeavor an accommodation between the Governor and the Assembly, that his Majesty's service might not be obstructed by their dissensions." Franklin was the very man to effect an accommodation, when he set his mind to it, as he did on this occasion; but "in the mean time," he relates, "the *Pacquet* had sailed with my sea stores, which was some loss to me, and my only recompence was his Lordship's

thanks for my service, all the credit for obtaining the accommodation falling to his share."

It was now war time, and the packets were at the disposal of Lord Loudoun, commander of the forces in America. The General was good enough to inform his accommodating friend that of the two packets then at New York, one was given out to sail on Saturday, the 12th of April—"but," the great man added very confidentially, "I may let you know, *entre nous*, that if you are there by Monday morning, you will be in time, but do not delay longer." As early as the 4th of April, accordingly, the provincial printer and Friend of the Human Race, accompanied by many neighbors "to see him out of the province," left Philadelphia. He arrived at Trenton "well before night," and expected, in case "the roads were no worse," to reach Woodbridge by the night following. In crossing over to New York on the Monday, some accident at the ferry delayed him, so that he did not reach the city till nearly noon, and he feared that he might miss the packet after all—Lord Loudoun had so precisely mentioned Monday morning. Happily, no such thing! The packet was still there. It did not sail that day, or the next either; and as late as the 29th of April

Franklin was still hanging about waiting to be off. For it was war time and the packets waited the orders of General Loudoun, who, ready in promises but slow in execution, was said to be "like St. George on the signs, always on horseback but never rides on."

Franklin himself was a deliberate man, and at the last moment he decided, for some reason or other, not to take the first packet. Behold him, therefore, waiting for the second through the month of May and the greater part of June! "This tedious state of uncertainty and long waiting," during which the agent of the Province of Pennsylvania, running back and forth from New York to Woodbridge, spent his time more uselessly than ever he remembered, was duly credited to the perversity of the British General. But at last they were off, and on the 26th of July, three and a half months after leaving Philadelphia, Franklin arrived in London to take up the work of his mission; and there he remained, always expecting to return shortly, but always delayed, for something more than five years.

These were glorious days in the history of Old England, the most heroic since the reign of Good Queen Bess. When the provincial printer arrived



n London, the King and the politicians had already been forced, through multiplied reverses in every part of the world, to confer power upon William Pitt, a disagreeable man indeed, but still a great genius and War Lord, who soon turned defeat into victory. It was the privilege of Franklin, here in the capital of the Empire, to share the exaltation engendered by those successive conquests that gave India and America to the little island kingdom, and made Englishmen, in Horace Walpole's phrase, "heirs apparent of the Romans." No Briton rejoiced more sincerely than this provincial American in the extension of the Empire. He labored with good will and good humor, and doubtless with good effect, to remove popular prejudice against his countrymen; and he wrote a masterly pamphlet to prove the wisdom of retaining Canada rather than Guadaloupe at the close of the war, confidently assuring his readers that the colonies would never, even when once the French danger was removed, "unite against their own nation, which protects and encourages them, with which they have so many connections and ties of blood, interest, and affection, and which as well known they all love much more than they love one another."

Franklin, at least, loved Old England, and it might well be maintained that these were the happiest years of his life. He was mentally so cosmopolitan, so much at ease in the world, that here in London he readily found himself at home indeed. The business of his particular mission, strictly attended to, occupied no great part of his time. He devoted long days to his beloved scientific experiments, and carried on a voluminous correspondence with David Hume and Lord Kames, and with many other men of note in England, France, and Italy. He made journeys, to Holland, to Cambridge, to ancestral places and the homes of surviving relatives; but mostly, one may imagine, he gave himself to a steady flow of that "agreeable and instructive conversation" of which he was so much the master and the devotee. He was more famous than he knew, and the reception that everywhere awaited him was flattering, and as agreeable to his unwarped and emancipated mind as it was flattering. "The regard and friendship I meet with," he confesses, "and the conversation of ingenious men, give me no small pleasure"; and at Cambridge, "my vanity was not a little gratified by the particular regard shown me by the Chancellor and Vice-

Chancellor of the University, and the Heads of the Colleges." As the years passed, the sense of being at ease among friends grew stronger; the serene and placid letters to "Dear Debby" became rather less frequent; the desire to return to America was much attenuated.

How delightful, indeed, was this Old England! "Of all the enviable things England has," he writes, "I envy it most its people. . . . Why should this little island enjoy in almost every neighborhood more sensible, virtuous, and elegant minds, than we can collect in ranging one hundred leagues of our vast forests?" What a proper place for a philosopher to spin out the remnant of his days! The idea had occurred to him; he was persistently urged by his friend William Strahan to carry it into effect; and his other friend, David Hume, made him a pretty compliment on the same theme: "America has sent us many good things, gold, silver, sugar, tobacco; but you are the first philosopher for whom we are beholden to her. It is our own fault that we have not kept him; whence it appears that we do not agree with Solomon, that wisdom is above gold; for we take good care never to send back an ounce of the latter, which we once lay our fingers upon." The

philosopher was willing enough to remain; and of the two objections which he mentioned to Strahan, the rooted aversion of his wife to embarking on the ocean and his love for Philadelphia, the latter for the moment clearly gave him less difficulty than the former. "I cannot leave this happy island and my friends in it without extreme regret," he writes at the moment of departure. "I am going from the old world to the new; and I fancy I feel like those who are leaving this world for the next; grief at the parting; fear of the passage; hope for the future."

When, on the 1st of November, 1762, Franklin quietly slipped into Philadelphia, he found that the new world had not forgotten him. For many days his house was filled from morning till night with a succession of friends, old and new, come to congratulate him on his return; excellent people all, no doubt, and yet presenting, one may suppose, a rather sharp contrast to the "virtuous and elegant minds" from whom he had recently parted in England. The letters he wrote, immediately following his return to America, to his friends William Strahan and Mary Stevenson lack something of the cheerful and contented good humor which is Franklin's most characteristic tone. His

thoughts, like those of a homesick man, are ever dwelling on his English friends, and he still nourishes the fond hope of returning, bag and baggage, to England for good and all. The very letter which he begins by relating the cordiality of his reception in Philadelphia he closes by assuring Strahan that "in two years at farthest I hope to settle all my affairs in such manner as that I may then conveniently remove to England—provided," he adds as an afterthought, "we can persuade the good woman to cross the sea. That will be the great difficulty."

It is not known whether it was this difficulty that prevented the eminent doctor, revered in two continents for his wisdom, from changing the place of his residence. Dear Debby, as docile as a child in most respects, very likely had her settled prejudices, of which the desire to remain on dry land may have been one, and one of the most obstinate. Or it may be that Franklin found himself too much occupied, too much involved in affairs after his long absence, to make even a beginning in his cherished plan; or else, as the months passed and he settled once more to the familiar, humdrum life of the American metropolis, sober second thought may have revealed to him

what was doubtless a higher wisdom. "Business, public and private, devours my time," he writes in March, 1764. "I must return to England for repose. With such thoughts I flatter myself, and need some kind friend to put me often in mind *that old trees cannot safely be transplanted.*" Perhaps, after all, Dear Debby was this kind friend; in which case Americans must all, to this day, be much indebted to the good woman.

At least it was no apprehension of difficulties arising between England and the colonies that induced Franklin to remain in America. The Peace of Paris he regarded as "the most advantageous" of any recorded in British annals, very fitting to mark the close of a successful war, and well suited to usher in the long period of prosperous felicity which should properly distinguish the reign of a virtuous prince. Never before, in Franklin's opinion, were the relations between Britain and her colonies more happy; and there could be, he thought, no good reason to fear that the excellent young King would be distressed, or his prerogative diminished, by factitious parliamentary opposition.

You now fear for our virtuous young King, that the faction forming will overpower him and render his reign uncomfortable [he writes to Strahan]. On the



contrary, I am of opinion that his virtue and the consciousness of his sincere intentions to make his people happy will give him firmness and steadiness in his measures and in the support of the honest friends he has chosen to serve him; and when that firmness is fully perceived, faction will dissolve and be dissipated like a morning fog before the rising sun, leaving the rest of the day clear with a sky serene and cloudless. Such after a few of the first years will be the future course of his Majesty's reign, which I predict will be happy and truly glorious. A new war I cannot yet see reason to apprehend. The peace will I think long continue, and your nation be as happy as they deserve to be.

## CHAPTER II

### THE BURDEN OF EMPIRE

Nothing of note in Parliament, except one slight day on the American taxes. — *Horace Walpole*.

THERE were plenty of men in England, any time before 1763, who found that an excellent arrangement which permitted them to hold office in the colonies while continuing to reside in London. They were thereby enabled to make debts, and sometimes even to pay them, without troubling much about their duties; and one may easily think of them, over their claret, as Mr. Trevelyan says, lamenting the cruelty of a secretary of state who hinted that, for form's sake at least, they had best show themselves once in a while in America. They might have replied with Junius: "It was not Virginia that wanted a governor, but a court favorite that wanted a salary." Certainly Virginia could do with a minimum of royal officials; but most court favorites wanted salaries, for with-

out salaries unendowed gentlemen could not conveniently live in London.

One of these gentlemen, in the year 1763, was Mr. Grosvenor Bedford. He was not, to be sure, a court favorite, but a man, now well along in years, who had long ago been appointed to be Collector of the Customs at the port of Philadelphia. The appointment had been made by the great minister, Robert Walpole, for whom Mr. Bedford had unquestionably done some service or other, and of whose son, Horace Walpole, the letter-writer, he had continued from that day to be a kind of dependent or protégé, being precisely the sort of unobtrusive factotum which that fastidious eccentric needed to manage his mundane affairs. But now, after this long time, when the King's business was placed in the hands of George Grenville, who entertained the odd notion that a Collector of the Customs should reside at the port of entry where the customs were collected rather than in London where he drew his salary, it was being noised about, and was presently reported at Strawberry Hill, that Mr. Bedford, along with many other estimable gentlemen, was forthwith to be turned out of his office.

To Horace Walpole it was a point of more than

academic importance to know whether gentlemen were to be unceremoniously turned out of their offices. As far back as 1738, while still a lad, he had himself been appointed to be Usher of the Exchequer; and as soon as he came of age, he says, "I took possession of two other little patent places in the Exchequer, called Comptroller of the Pipe, and Clerk of the Estreats" — all these places having been procured for him through the generosity of his father. The duties of these offices, one may suppose, were not arduous, for it seems that they were competently administered by Mr. Grosvenor Bedford, in addition to his duties as Collector of the Customs at the port of Philadelphia; so well administered, indeed, that Horace Walpole's income from them, which in 1740 was perhaps not more than £1500 a year, nearly doubled in the course of a generation. And this income, together with another thousand which he had annually from the Collector's place in the Custom House, added to the interest of £20,000 which he had inherited, enabled him to live very well, with immense leisure for writing odd books, and letters full of extremely interesting comment on the levity and low aims of his contemporaries.

And so Horace Walpole, good patron that he

was and competent letter-writer, very naturally, hearing that Mr. Bedford was to lose an office to which in the course of years he had become much accustomed, sat down and wrote a letter to Mr. George Grenville in behalf of his friend and servant. "Though I am sensible I have no pretensions for asking you a favour, . . . yet I flatter myself I shall not be thought quite impertinent in interceding for a person, who I can answer has neither been to blame nor any way deserved punishment, and therefore I think you, Sir, will be ready to save him from prejudice. The person I mean is my deputy, Mr. Grosvenor Bedford, who, above five and twenty years ago, was appointed Collector of the Customs in Philadelphia by my father. I hear he is threatened to be turned out. If the least fault can be laid to his charge, I do not desire to have him protected. If there cannot, I am too well persuaded, Sir, of your justice not to be sure you will be pleased to protect him."

George Grenville, a dry, precise man of great knowledge and industry, almost always right in little matters and very patient of the misapprehensions of less exact people, wrote in reply a letter which many would think entirely adequate to the matter in hand:

I have never heard [he began] of any complaint against Mr. Grosvenor Bedford, or of any desire to turn him out; but by the office which you tell me he holds in North America, I believe I know the state of the case, which I will inform you of, that you may be enabled to judge of it yourself. Heavy complaints were last year made in Parliament of the state of our revenues in North America which amount to between £1,000 and £2,000 a year, the collecting of which costs upon the establishment of the Customs in Great Britain between £7,000 and £8,000 a year. This, it was urged, arose from the making all these offices sinecures in England. When I came to the Treasury<sup>1</sup> I directed the Commissioners of the Customs to be written to, that they might inform us how the revenue might be improved, and to what causes they attributed the present diminished state of it. . . . The principal cause which they assigned was the absence of the officers who lived in England by leave of the Treasury, which they proposed should be recalled. This we complied with, and ordered them all to their duty, and the Commissioners of the Customs to present others in the room of such as should not obey. I take it for granted that this is Mr. Bedford's case. If it is, it will be attended with difficulty to make an exception, as they are every one of them applying to be excepted out of the orders. . . . If it is not so, or if Mr. Bedford can suggest to me any proper means of obviating it without overturning the whole regulation, he will do me a sensible pleasure.

<sup>1</sup> On the resignation of Lord Bute in April, 1763, Grenville formed a ministry, himself taking the two offices of First Lord of the Treasury and Chancellor of the Exchequer.

There is no evidence to show that Mr. Bedford was able to do Mr. Grenville this "sensible pleasure." The incident, apparently closed, was one of many indications that a new policy for dealing with America was about to be inaugurated; and although Grenville had been made minister for reasons that were remote enough from any question of efficiency in government, no better man could have been chosen for applying to colonial administration the principles of good business management. His connection with the Treasury, as well as the natural bent of his mind, had made him "confessedly the ablest man of business in the House of Commons." The Governors of the Bank of England, very efficient men certainly, held it a great point in the minister's favor that they "could never do business with any man with the same ease they had done it with him." Undoubtedly the first axiom of business is that one's accounts should be kept straight, one's books nicely balanced; the second, that one's assets should exceed one's liabilities. Mr. Grenville, accordingly, "had studied the revenues with professional assiduity, and something of professional ideas seemed to mingle in all his regulations concerning them." He "felt the



weight of debt, amounting at this time to one hundred and fifty-eight millions, which oppressed his country, and he looked to the amelioration of the revenue as the only mode of relieving it."

It is true there were some untouched sources of revenue still available in England. As sinecures went in that day, Mr. Grosvenor Bedford's was not of the best; and on any consideration of the matter from the point of view of revenue only, Grenville might well have turned his attention to a different class of officials; for example, to the Master of the Rolls in Ireland, Mr. Rigby, who was also Paymaster of the Forces, and to whose credit there stood at the Bank of England, as Mr. Trevelyan assures us, a million pounds of the public money, the interest of which was paid to him "or to his creditors." This was a much better thing than Grosvenor Bedford had with his paltry collectorship at Philadelphia; and the interest on a million pounds, more or less, had it been diverted from Mr. Rigby's pocket to the public treasury, would perhaps have equaled the entire increase in the revenue to be expected from even the most efficient administration of the customs in all the ports of America. In addition, it should perhaps be said that Mr. Rigby, although excelled by none,

was by no means the only man in high place with a good degree of talent for exploiting the common chest.

The reform of such practices, very likely, was work for a statesman rather than for a man of business. A good man of business, called upon to manage the King's affairs, was likely to find many obstacles in the way of depriving the Paymaster of the Forces of his customary sources of income, and Mr. Grenville, at least, never attempted anything so hazardous. Scurrilous pamphleteers, in fact, had made it a charge against the minister that he had increased rather than diminished the evil of sinecures—"It had been written in pamphlets that £400,000 a year was dealt out in pensions"; from which charge the able Chancellor, on the occasion of opening his first budget in the House of Commons, the 9th of March, 1764, defended himself by denying that the sums were "so great as alleged." It was scarcely an adequate defense; but the truth is that Grenville was sure to be less distressed by a bad custom, no law forbidding, than by a law, good or bad, not strictly enforced, particularly if the law was intended to bring in a revenue.

Instinctively, therefore, the minister turned to

America, where it was a notorious fact that there were revenue laws that had not been enforced these many years. Mr. Grenville, we may suppose, since it was charged against him in a famous epigram, read the American dispatches with considerable care, so that it is quite possible he may have chanced to see and to shake his head over the sworn statement of Mr. Sampson Toovey, a statement which throws much light upon colonial liberties and the practices of English officials in those days:

I, Sampson Toovey [so the statement runs], Clerk to James Cockle, Esq., Collector of His Majesty's Customs for the Port of Salem, do declare on oath, that ever since I have been in the office, it hath been customary for said Cockle to receive of the masters of vessels entering from Lisbon, casks of wine, boxes of fruit, etc., which was a gratuity for suffering their vessels to be entered with salt or ballast only, and passing over unnoticed such cargoes of wine, fruit, etc., which are prohibited to be imported into His Majesty's plantations. Part of which wine, fruit, etc., the said James Cockle used to share with Governor Bernard. And I further declare that I used to be the negotiator of this business, and receive the wine, fruit, etc., and dispose of them agreeable to Mr. Cockle's orders. Witness my hand. Sampson Toovey.

The curious historian would like much to know, in case Mr. Grenville did see the declaration of Samp-

son Toovey, whether he saw also a letter in which Governor Bernard gave it as his opinion that if the colonial governments were to be refashioned it should be on a new plan, since "there is no system in North America fit to be made a module of."

Secretary Grenville, whether or not he ever saw this letter from Governor Bernard, was familiar with the ideas which inspired it. Most crown officials in America, and the governors above all, finding themselves little more than executive agents of the colonial assemblies, had long clamored for the remodeling of colonial governments: the charters, they said, should be recalled; the functions of the assemblies should be limited and more precisely defined; judges should be appointed at the pleasure of the King; and judges and governors alike should be paid out of a permanent civil list in England drawn from revenue raised in America. In urging these changes, crown officials in America were powerfully supported by men of influence in England; by Halifax since the day, some fifteen years before, when he was appointed to the office of Colonial Secretary; by the brilliant Charles Townshend who, in the year 1763, as first Lord of the Treasury in Bute's ministry, had formulated a bill which

would have been highly pleasing to Governor Bernard had it been passed into law. And now similar schemes were being urged upon Grenville by his own colleagues, notably by the Earl of Halifax, who is said to have become, in a formal interview with the first minister, extremely heated and eager in the matter.

But all to no purpose. Mr. Grenville was well content with the form of the colonial governments, being probably of Pope's opinion that "the system that is best administered is best." In Grenville's opinion, the Massachusetts government was good enough, and all the trouble arose from the inattention of royal officials to their manifest duties and from the pleasant custom of depositing at Governor Bernard's back door sundry pipes of wine with the compliments of Mr. Cockle. Most men in England agreed that such pleasant customs had been tolerated long enough. To their suppression the first minister accordingly gave his best attention; and while Mr. Rigby continued to enjoy great perquisites in England, many obscure customs officials, such as Grosvenor Bedford, were ordered to their posts to prevent small peculations in America. To assist them, or their successors, in this business, ships of war were stationed conveniently for the

intercepting of smugglers, general writs were authorized to facilitate the search for goods illegally entered, and the governors, His Excellency Governor Bernard among the number, were newly instructed to give their best efforts to the enforcement of the trade acts.

All this was but an incident, to be sure, in the minister's general scheme for "ameliorating the revenue." It was not until the 9th of March, 1764, that Grenville, "not disguising how much he was hurt by abuse," opened his first budget, "fully, for brevity was not his failing," and still with great "art and ability." Although ministers were to be congratulated, he thought, "on the revenue being managed with more frugality than in the late reign," the House scarcely need be told that the war had greatly increased the debt, an increase not to be placed at a lower figure than some seventy odd millions; and so, on account of this great increase in the debt, and in spite of gratifying advances in the customs duties and the salutary cutting off of the German subsidies, taxes were now, the House would easily understand, necessarily much higher than formerly -- "our taxes," he said, "exceeded by three millions what they were in 1754." Much money, doubtless,



could still be raised on the land tax, if the House was at all disposed to put on another half shilling in the pound. Ministers could take it quite for granted, however, that country squires, sitting on the benches, would not be disposed to increase the land tax, but would much prefer some skillful manipulation of the colonial customs, provided only there was some one who understood that art well enough to explain to the House where such duties were meant to fall and how much they might reasonably be expected to bring in. And there, in fact, was Mr. Grenville explaining it all with "art and ability," for which task, indeed, there could be none superior to his Majesty's Chancellor of the Exchequer, who had so long "studied the revenue with professional assiduity."

The items of the budget, rather dull reading now and none too illuminating, fell pleasantly upon the ears of country squires sitting there on the benches; and the particular taxes no doubt seemed reasonably clear to them, even if they had no perfect understanding of the laws of incidence, inasmuch as sundry of the new duties apparently fell upon the distant Americans, who were known to be rich and were generally thought, on no less an authority than Jasper Mauduit, agent of the



Province of Massachusetts Bay, to be easily able and not unwilling to pay considerable sums towards ameliorating the revenue. It was odd, perhaps, that Americans should be willing to pay; but that was no great matter, if they were able, since no one could deny their obligation. And so country squires, and London merchants too, listened comfortably to the reading of the budget so well designed to relieve the one of taxes and swell the profits flowing into the coffers of the other.

That a duty of £2 19s. 9d. per cwt. avoirdupois, be laid upon all foreign coffee, imported from any place (except Great Britain) into the British colonies and plantations in America. That a duty of 6d. per pound weight be laid upon all foreign indico, imported into the said colonies and plantations. That a duty of £7 per ton be laid upon all wine of the growth of the Madeiras, or of any other island or place, lawfully imported from the respective place of the growth of such wine, into the said colonies and plantations. That a duty of 10s. per ton be laid upon all Portugal, Spanish, or other wine (except French wine), imported from Great Britain into the said colonies and plantations. That a duty of 2s. per pound weight be laid upon all wrought silks, Bengals, and stuffs mixed with silk or herba, of the manufacture of Persia, China, or East India, imported from Great Britain into the said colonies and plantations. That a duty of 2s. 6d. per piece be laid upon all calicoes. . . .

The list no doubt was a long one; and quite right, too, thought country squires, all of whom, to a man, were willing to pay no more land tax.

Other men besides country squires were interested in Mr. Grenville's budget, notably the West Indian sugar planters, virtually and actually represented in the House of Commons and voting there this day. Many of them were rich men no doubt; but sugar planting, they would assure you in confidence, was not what it had been; and if they were well off after a fashion, they might have been much better off but for the shameless frauds which for thirty years had made a dead letter of the Molasses Act of 1733. It was notorious that the merchants of the northern and middle colonies, regarding neither the Acts of Trade nor the dictates of nature, had every year carried their provisions and fish to the foreign islands, receiving in exchange molasses, cochineal, "medical druggs," and "gold and silver in bullion and coin." With molasses the thrifty New Englanders made great quantities of inferior rum, the common drink of that day, regarded as essential to the health of sailors engaged in fishing off the Grand Banks, and by far the cheapest and most effective instrument for procuring negroes in

Africa or for inducing the western Indians to surrender their valuable furs for some trumpery of colored cloth or spangled bracelet. All this thriving traffic did not benefit British planters, who had molasses of their own and a superior quality of rum which they were not unwilling to sell.

Such traffic, since it did not benefit them, British planters were disposed to think must be bad for England. They were therefore willing to support Mr. Grenville's budget, which proposed that the importation of foreign rum into any British colony be prohibited in future; and which further proposed that the Act of 6 George II, c. 13, be continued, with modifications to make it effective, the modifications of chief importance being the additional duty of twenty-two shillings per hundred-weight upon all sugar and the reduction by one half of the prohibitive duty of sixpence on all foreign molasses imported into the British plantations. It was a matter of minor importance doubtless, but one to which they had no objections since the minister made a point of it, that the produce of all the duties which should be raised by virtue of the said act, made in the sixth year of His late Majesty's reign, "be paid into the receipt of His Majesty's Exchequer, and there reserved, to be from time to

time disposed of by Parliament, towards defraying the necessary expences of defending, protecting, and securing the British colonies and plantations in America."

With singularly little debate, honorable and right honorable members were ready to vote this new Sugar Act, having the minister's word for it that it would be enforced, the revenue thereby much improved, and a sudden stop put to the long-established illicit traffic with the foreign islands, a traffic so beneficial to the northern colonies, so prejudicial to the Empire and the pockets of planters. Thus it was that Mr. Grenville came opportunely to the aid of the Spanish authorities, who for many years had employed their *guarda costas* in a vain effort to suppress this very traffic, conceiving it, oddly enough, to be injurious to Spain and highly advantageous to Britain.

It may be that the Spanish authorities regarded the West Indian trade as a commercial system rather than as a means of revenue. This aspect of the matter, the commercial effects of his measures, Mr. Grenville at all events managed not to take sufficiently into account, which was rather odd, seeing that he professed to hold the commercial system embodied in the Navigation and Trade

Acts in such high esteem, as a kind of "English Palladium." No one could have wished less than Grenville to lay sacrilegious hands on this Palladium, have less intended to throw sand into the nicely adjusted bearings of the Empire's smoothly working commercial system. If he managed nevertheless to do something of this sort, it was doubtless by virtue of being such a "good man of business," by virtue of viewing the art of government too narrowly as a question of revenue only. For the moment, preoccupied as they were with the quest of revenue, the new measures seemed to Mr. Grenville and to the squires and planters who voted them well adapted to raising a moderate sum, part only of some £350,000, for the just and laudable purpose of "defraying the necessary expences of defending, protecting, and securing the British colonies and plantations in America."

The problem of colonial defense, so closely connected with the question of revenue, was none of Grenville's making but was a legacy of the war and of that Peace of Paris which had added an immense territory to the Empire. When the diplomats of England and France at last discovered, in some mysterious manner, that it had "pleased the Most High to diffuse the spirit of

union and concord among the Princes," the world was informed that, as the price of "a Christian, universal, and perpetual peace," France would cede to England what had remained to her of Nova Scotia, Canada, and all the possessions of France on the left bank of the Mississippi except the City of New Orleans and the island on which it stands; that she would cede also the islands of Grenada and the Grenadines, the islands of St. Vincent, Dominica, and Tobago, and the River Senegal with all of its forts and factories; and that she would for the future be content, so far as her activities in India were concerned, with the five factories which she possessed there at the beginning of the year 1749.

The average Briton, as well as honorable and right honorable members of the House, had known that England possessed colonies and had understood that colonies, as a matter of course, existed to supply him with sugar and rice, indigo and tobacco, and in return to buy at a good price whatever he might himself wish to sell. Beyond all this he had given slight attention to the matter of colonies until the great Pitt had somewhat stirred his slow imagination with talk of empire and destiny. It was doubtless a liberalizing as



well as a sobering revelation to be told that he was the "heir apparent of the Romans," with the responsibilities that are implied in having a high mission in the world. Now that his attention was called to the matter, it seemed to the average Briton that in meeting the obligation of this high mission and in dealing with this far-flung empire, a policy of efficiency such as that advocated by Mr. Grenville might well replace a policy of salutary neglect; and if the national debt had doubled during the war, as he was authoritatively assured, why indeed should not the Americans, grown rich under the fostering care of England and lately freed from the menace of France by the force of British arms, be expected to observe the Trade Acts and to contribute their fair share to the defense of that new world of which they were the chief beneficiaries?

If Americans were quite ready in their easy-going way to take chances in the matter of defense, hoping that things would turn out for the best in the future as they had in the past, British statesmen and right honorable members of the House, viewing the question broadly and without provincial illusions, understood that a policy of preparedness was the only salvation; a policy of muddling



through would no longer suffice as it had done in the good old days before country squires and London merchants realized that their country was a world power. In those days, when the shrewd Robert Walpole refused to meddle with schemes for taxing America, the accepted theory of defense was a simple one. If Britain policed the sea and kept the Bourbons in their place, it was thought that the colonies might be left to manage the Indians; fur traders, whose lure the red man could not resist, and settlers occupying the lands beyond the mountains, so it was said, would do the business. In 1749, five hundred thousand acres of land had been granted to the Ohio Company "in the King's interest" and "to cultivate a friendship with the nations of Indians inhabiting those parts"; and as late as 1754 the Board of Trade was still encouraging the rapid settling of the West, "inasmuch as nothing can more effectively tend to defeat the dangerous designs of the French."

On the eve of the last French war it may well have seemed to the Board of Trade that this policy was being attended with gratifying results. In the year 1749, La Galissonière, the acting Governor of Canada, commissioned Céloron de Blainville to

take possession of the Ohio Valley, which he did in form, descending the river to the Maumee, and so to Lake Erie and home again, having at convenient points proclaimed the sovereignty of Louis XV over that country, and having laid down, as evidence of the accomplished fact, certain lead plates bearing awe-inspiring inscriptions, some of which have been discovered and are preserved to this day. It was none the less a dangerous junket. Everywhere Blainville found the Indians of hostile mind; everywhere, in every village almost, he found English traders plying their traffic and "cultivating a friendship with the Indians"; so that upon his return in 1750, in spite of the lead plates so securely buried, he must needs write in his journal: "All I can say is that the nations of those countries are ill disposed towards the French and devoted to the English."

During the first years of the war all this devotion was nevertheless seen to be of little worth. Like Providence, the Indians were sure to side with the big battalions. For want of a few effective garrisons at the beginning, the English found themselves deserted by their quondam allies, and although they recovered this facile allegiance as soon as the French garrisons were

taken, it was evident enough in the late years of the war that fear alone inspired the red man's loyalty. The Indian apparently did not realize at this early date that his was an inferior race destined to be supplanted. Of a primitive and uncultivated intelligence, it was not possible for him to foresee the beneficent designs of the Ohio Company or to observe with friendly curiosity the surveyors who came to draw imaginary lines through the virgin forest. And therefore, even in an age when the natural rights of man were being loudly proclaimed, the "Nations of Indians inhabiting those parts" were only too ready to believe what the Virginia traders told them of the Pennsylvanians, what the Pennsylvania traders told them of the Virginians—that the fair words of the English were but a kind of mask to conceal the greed of men who had no other desire than to deprive the red man of his beloved hunting grounds.

Thus it was that the industrious men with pedantic minds who day by day read the dispatches that accumulated in the office of the Board of Trade became aware, during the years from 1758 to 1761, that the old policy of defense was not altogether adequate. "The granting of

lands hitherto unsettled," so the Board reported in 1761, "appears to be a measure of the most dangerous tendency." In December of the same year all governors were accordingly forbidden "to pass grants . . . or encourage settlements upon any lands within the said colonies which may interfere with the Indians bordering upon them."

The policy thus initiated found final expression in the famous Proclamation of 1763, in the early months of Grenville's ministry. By the terms of the Proclamation no further grants were to be made within lands "which, not having been ceded to, or purchased by us, are reserved to the said Indians" — that is to say, "all the lands lying to the westward of the sources of the rivers which fall into the sea from the west or the northwest." All persons who had "either willfully or inadvertently seated themselves" on the reserved lands were required "forthwith to remove themselves"; and for the future no man was to presume to trade with the Indians without first giving bond to observe such regulations as "we shall at any time think fit to . . . direct for the benefit of the said trade." All these provisions were designed "to the end that the Indians may be convinced of our justice and determined

resolution to remove all reasonable cause of discontent." By royal act the territory west of the Alleghanies to the Mississippi, from Florida to 50° north latitude, was thus closed to settlement "for the present" and "reserved to the Indians."

Having thus taken measures to protect the Indians against the colonists, the mother country was quite ready to protect the colonists against the Indians. Rash Americans were apt to say the danger was over now that the French were "expelled from Canada." This statement was childish enough in view of the late Pontiac uprising which was with such great difficulty suppressed — if indeed one could say that it was suppressed — by a general as efficient even as Amherst, with seasoned British troops at his command. The red man, even if he submitted outwardly, harbored in his vengeful heart the rankling memory of many griefs, real or imaginary; and he was still easily swayed by his ancient but now humiliated French friends, who had been "expelled from Canada" only indeed in a political sense but were still very much there as promoters of trouble. What folly, therefore, to talk of withdrawing the troops from America! No sane man but could see that, under the circumstances, such a move was quite out of the question.

It would materially change the circumstances, undoubtedly, if Americans could ever be induced to undertake, in any systematic and adequate manner, to provide for their own defense in their own way. In that case the mother country would be only too glad to withdraw her troops, of which indeed she had none too many. But it was well known what the colonists could be relied upon to do, or rather what they could be relied upon not to do, in the way of coöperative effort. Ministers had not forgotten that on the eve of the last war, at the very climax of the danger, the colonial assemblies had rejected a Plan of Union prepared by Benjamin Franklin, the one man, if any man there was, to bring the colonies together. They had rejected the plan as involving too great concentration of authority, and they were unwilling to barter the veriest jot or tittle of their much prized provincial liberty for any amount of protection. And if they rejected this plan — a very mild and harmless plan, ministers were bound to think — it was not likely they could be induced, in time of peace, to adopt any plan that might be thought adequate in England. Such a plan, for example, was that prepared by the Board of Trade, by which commissioners appointed by the governors were

empowered to determine the military establishment and to apportion the expense of maintaining it among the several colonies on the basis of wealth and population. Assemblies which for years past had systematically deprived governors of all discretionary power to expend money raised by the assemblies themselves would surely never surrender to governors the power of determining how much assemblies should raise for governors to expend.

Doubtless it might be said with truth that the colonies had voluntarily contributed more than their fair share in the last war; but it was also true that Pitt, and Pitt alone, could get them to do this. The King could not always count on there being in England a great genius like Pitt, and besides he did not always find it convenient, for reasons which could be given, to employ a great genius like Pitt. A system of defense had to be designed for normal times and normal men; and in normal times with normal men at the helm, ministers were agreed, the American attitude towards defense was very cleverly described by Franklin: "Everyone cries, a Union is absolutely necessary, but when it comes to the manner and form of the Union, their weak noddles are perfectly distracted."



Noddles of ministers, however, were in no way distracted but saw clearly that, if Americans could not agree on any plan of defense, there was no alternative but "an interposition of the authority of Parliament." Such interposition, recommended by the Board of Trade and already proposed by Charles Townshend in the last ministry, was now taken in hand by Grenville. The troops were to remain in America; the Mutiny Act, which required soldiers in barracks to be furnished with provisions and utensils by local authorities, and which as a matter of course went where the army went, was supplemented by the Quartering Act, which made further provision for the billeting and supplying of the troops in America. And for raising some part of the general maintenance fund ministers could think of no tax more equitable, or easier to be levied and collected, than a stamp tax. Some such tax, stamp tax or poll tax, had often been recommended by colonial governors, as a means of bringing the colonies "to a sense of their duty to the King, to awaken them to take care of their lives and their fortunes." A crown officer in North Carolina, Mr. M'Culloh, was good enough to assure Mr. Charles Jenkinson, one of the Secretaries of the Treasury, backing up his assertion with sundry

statistical exhibits, that a stamp tax on the continental colonies would easily yield £60,000, and twice that sum if extended to the West Indies. As early as September 23, 1763, Mr. Jenkinson, acting on an authorization of the Treasury Board, accordingly wrote to the Commissioners of Stamped Duties, directing them "to prepare, for their Lordships' consideration, a draft of an act for imposing proper stamp duties on His Majesty's subjects in America and the West Indies."

Mr. Grenville, who was not in any case the man to do things in a hurry, nevertheless proceeded very leisurely in the matter. He knew very well that Pitt had refused to "burn his fingers" with any stamp tax; and some men, such as his friend and secretary, Mr. Jackson, for example, and the Earl of Hillsborough, advised him to abandon the project altogether, while others urged delay at least, in order that Americans might have an opportunity to present their objections, if they had any. It was decided therefore to postpone the matter for a year; and in presenting the budget on March 9, 1764, the first minister merely gave notice that "it may be proper to charge certain stamp duties in the said colonies and plantations." Of all the plans for taxing America, he said, this

one seemed to him the best; yet he was not wedded to it, and would willingly adopt any other preferred by the colonists, if they could suggest any other of equal efficacy. Meanwhile, he wished only to call upon honorable members of the House to say now, if any were so minded, that Parliament had not the right to impose any tax, external or internal, upon the colonies; to which solemn question, asked in full house, there was not one negative, nor any reply except Alderman Beckford saying: "As we are stout, I hope we shall be merciful."

It soon appeared that Americans did have objections to a stamp tax. Whether it were equitable or not, they would rather it should not be laid, really preferring not to be dished up in any sauce whatever, however fine. The tax might, as ministers said, be easily collected, or its collection might perhaps be attended with certain difficulties; in either case it would remain, for reasons which they were ready to advance, a most objectionable tax. Certain colonial agents then in England accordingly sought an interview with the first minister in order to convince him, if possible, of this fact. Grenville was very likely more than ready to grant them an interview, relying upon the strength of his position, on his "tenderness for the

subjects in America," and upon his well-known powers of persuasion, to bring them to his way of thinking. To get from the colonial agents a kind of assent to his measure would be to win a point of no slight strategic value, there being at least a modicum of truth in the notion that just government springs from the consent of the governed.

I have proposed the resolution [the minister explained to the agents] from a real regard and tenderness for the subjects in the colonies. It is highly reasonable they should contribute something towards the charge of protecting themselves, and in aid of the great expense Great Britain has put herself to on their account. No tax appears to me so easy and equitable as a stamp duty. It will fall only upon property, will be collected by the fewest officers, and will be equally spread over America and the West Indies. . . . It does not require any number of officers vested with extraordinary powers of entering houses, or extend a sort of influence which I never wished to increase. The colonists now have it in their power, by agreeing to this tax, to establish a precedent for their being consulted before any tax is imposed upon them by Parliament; for their approbation of it being signified to Parliament next year . . . will afford a forcible argument for the like proceeding in all such cases. If they think of any other mode of taxation more convenient to them, and make any proposition of equal efficacy with the stamp duty, I will give it all due consideration.

The agents appear at least to have been silenced by this speech, which was, one must admit, so fatherly and so very reasonable in tone; and doubtless Grenville thought them convinced, too, since he always so perfectly convinced himself. At all events, he found it possible, for this or for some other reason, to put the whole matter out of his mind until the next year. The patriotic American historian, well instructed in the importance of the Stamp Act, has at first a difficulty in understanding how it could occupy, among the things that interested English statesmen at this time, a strictly subordinate place; and he wonders greatly, as he runs with eager interest through the correspondence of Grenville for the year 1764, to find it barely mentioned there. Whether the King received him less coldly today than the day before yesterday was apparently more on the minister's mind than any possibility that the Stamp Act might be received rather warmly in the colonies. The contemporaries of Grenville, even Pitt himself, have almost as little to say about the coming great event; all of which compels the historian, reviewing the matter judiciously, to reflect sadly that Englishmen of that day were not as fully aware of the importance of the measure

before it was passed as good patriots have since become.

There is much to confirm this notion in the circumstances attending the passage of the bill through Parliament in the winter of 1765. Grenville was perhaps further reassured, in spite of persistent rumors of much high talk in America, by the results of a second interview which he had with the colonial agents just before introducing the measure into the House of Commons. "I take no pleasure," he again explained in his reasonable way, "in bringing upon myself their resentments; it is my duty to manage the revenue. I have really been made to believe that, considering the whole circumstances of the mother country and the colonies, the latter can and ought to pay something to the common cause. I know of no better way than that now pursuing to lay such a tax. If you can tell of a better, I will adopt it."

Franklin, who was present with the others on this occasion, ventured to suggest that the "usual constitutional way" of obtaining colonial support, through the King's requisition, would be better. "Can you agree," asked Grenville, "on the proportions each colony should raise?" No, they could not agree, as Franklin was bound to admit,



knowing the fact better than most men. And if no adequate answer was forthcoming from Franklin, a man so ready in expedients and so practiced in the subtleties of dialectic, it is no great wonder that Grenville thought the agents now fully convinced by his reasoning, which after all was only an impersonal formulation of the inexorable logic of the situation.

Proceeding thus leisurely, having taken so much pains to elicit reasonable objection and none being forthcoming, Grenville, quite sure of his ground, brought in from the Ways and Means Committee, in February, 1765, the fifty-five resolutions which required that stamped paper, printed by the government and sold by officers appointed for that purpose, be used for nearly all legal documents, for all customs papers, for appointments to all offices carrying a salary of £20 except military and judicial offices, for all grants of privilege and franchises made by the colonial assemblies, for licenses to retail liquors, for all pamphlets, advertisements, handbills, newspapers, almanacs, and calendars, and for the sale of packages containing playing cards and dice. The expediency of the act was now explained to the House, as it had been explained to the agents. That the act was legal,



which few people in fact denied, Grenville, doing everything thoroughly and with system, proceeded to demonstrate also. The colonies claim, he said, "the privilege of all British subjects of being taxed only with their own consent." Well, for his part, he hoped they might always enjoy that privilege. "May this sacred pledge of liberty," cried the minister with unwonted eloquence, "be preserved inviolate to the utmost verge of our dominions and to the latest pages of our history." But Americans were clearly wrong in supposing the Stamp Act would deprive them of the rights of Englishmen, for, upon any ground on which it could be said that Englishmen were represented, it could be maintained, and he was free to assert, that Americans were represented, in Parliament, which was the common council of the whole Empire.

The measure was well received. Mr. Jackson supposed that Parliament had a right to tax America, but he much doubted the expediency of the present act. If it was necessary, as ministers claimed, to tax the colonies, the latter should be permitted to elect some part of the Parliament, "otherwise the liberties of America, I do not say will be lost, but will be in danger." The one notable event of this "slight day" was occasioned

by a remark of Charles Townshend, who asked with some asperity whether "these American children, planted by our care, nourished up by our indulgence to a degree of strength and opulence, and protected by our arms," would now be so unfilial as to "grudge to contribute their mite to relieve us from the heavy burden under which we lie?" Upon which Colonel Isaac Barré sprang to his feet and delivered an impassioned, unpremeditated reply which stirred the dull House for perhaps three minutes:

They planted by *your* care! No; your oppression planted them in America. They fled from your tyranny to a then uncultivated, inhospitable country, where they exposed themselves to almost all the hardships to which human nature is liable. . . . They nourished up by *your* indulgence! They grew by your neglect of them. As soon as you began to care about them, that care was exercised in sending persons to rule them in one department and another, who were, perhaps, the deputies of deputies to some members of this house, sent to spy out their liberties, to misrepresent their actions, and to prey upon them; men whose behaviour on many occasions has caused the blood of these sons of liberty to recoil within them. . . . They protected by *your* arms! They have nobly taken up arms in your defense; have exerted a valor amidst their constant and laborious industry, for the defense of a country whose frontier was drenched in blood,

while its interior parts yielded all its little savings to your emolument.

A very warm speech, and a capital hit, too, thought the honorable members of the House, as they settled comfortably back again to endure the routine of a dull day. Towards midnight, after seven hours of languid debate, an adjournment was carried, as everyone foresaw it would be, by a great majority — 205 to 49 in support of the ministry. On the 13th of February the Stamp Act bill was introduced and read for the first time, without debate. It passed the House on the 27th; on the 8th of March it was approved by the Lords without protest, amendment, debate, or division; and two weeks later, the King being then temporarily out of his mind, the bill received the royal assent by commission.

At a later day, when the fatal effects of the Act were but too apparent, it was made a charge against the ministers that they had persisted in passing the measure in the face of strong opposition. But it was not so. "As to the fact of a strenuous opposition to the Stamp Act," said Burke, in his famous speech on American taxation, "I sat as a stranger in your gallery when it was under consideration. Far from anything inflam-

matory, I never heard a more languid debate in this house. . . . In fact, the affair passed with so very, very little noise, that in town they scarcely knew the nature of what you were doing." So far as men concerned themselves with the doings of Parliament, the colonial measures of Grenville were greatly applauded; and that not alone by men who were ignorant of America. Thomas Pownall, once Governor of Massachusetts, well acquainted with the colonies and no bad friend of their liberties, published in April, 1764, a pamphlet on the *Administration of the Colonies* which he dedicated to George Grenville, "the great minister," who he desired might live to see the "power, prosperity, and honor that must be given to his country, by so great and important an event as the interweaving the administration of the colonies into the British administration."

## CHAPTER III

### THE RIGHTS OF A NATION

British subjects, by removing to America, cultivating a wilderness, extending the domain, and increasing the wealth, commerce, and power of the mother country, at the hazard of their lives and fortunes, ought not, and in fact do not thereby lose their native rights. — *Benjamin Franklin.*

It was the misfortune of Grenville that this "interweaving," as Pownall described it, should have been undertaken at a most inopportune time, when the very conditions which made Englishmen conscious of the burden of empire were giving to Americans a new and highly stimulating sense of power and independence. The marvelous growth of the colonies in population and wealth, much commented upon by all observers and asserted by ministers as one principal reason why Americans should pay taxes, was indeed well worth some consideration. A million and a half of people spread over the Atlantic seaboard might be thought no great number; but it was a new thing in the world.

well worth noting — which had in fact been carefully noted by Benjamin Franklin in a pamphlet on *The Increase of Mankind, Peopling of Countries, etc.* — that within three-quarters of a century the population of the continental colonies had doubled every twenty-five years, whereas the population of Old England during a hundred years past had not doubled once and now stood at only some six and a half millions. If this should go on — and, considering the immense stretches of free land beyond the mountains, no one could suppose that the present rate of increase would soon fall off — it was not unlikely that in another century the center of empire, following the course of the sun, would come to rest in the New World. With these facts in mind, one might indeed say that a people with so much vitality and expansive power was abundantly able to pay taxes; but perhaps it was also a fair inference, if any one was disposed to press the matter, that, unless it was so minded, such a people was already, or assuredly soon would be, equally able not to pay them.

People in new countries, being called provincial, being often told in effect that having made their bed they may lie in it, easily maintain their self-respect if they are able to say that the bed

is indeed a very comfortable one. If, therefore, Americans had been given to boasting, their growing wealth was not, any more than their increasing numbers, a thing to be passed over in silence. In every colony the "starving time," even if it had ever existed, was now no more than an ancient tradition. "Every man of industry has it in his power to live well," according to William Smith of New York, "and many are the instances of persons who came here distressed in their poverty who now enjoy easy and plentiful fortunes." If Americans were not always aware that they were rich men individually, they were at all events well instructed, by old-world visitors who came to observe them with a certain air of condescension, that collectively at least their material prosperity was a thing to be envied even by more advanced and more civilized peoples. Therefore any man called upon to pay a penny tax and finding his pocket bare might take a decent pride in the fact, which none need doubt since foreigners like Peter Kalm found it so, that "the English colonies in this part of the world have increased so much in . . . their riches, that they almost vie with old England."

That the colonies might possibly "vie with old



England," was a notion which good Americans could contemplate with much equanimity; and even if the Swedish traveler, according to a habit of travelers, had stretched the facts a point or two, it was still abundantly clear that the continental colonies were thought to be, even by Englishmen themselves, of far greater importance to the mother country than they had formerly been. Very old men could remember the time when English statesmen and economists, viewing colonies as providentially designed to promote the increase of trade, had regarded the northern colonies as little better than heavy incumbrances on the Empire, and their commerce scarcely worth the cost of protection. It was no longer so; it could no longer be said that two-thirds of colonial commerce was with the tobacco and sugar plantations, or that Jamaica took off more English exports than the middle and northern colonies combined; but it could be said, and was now being loudly proclaimed—when it was a point of debate whether to keep Canada or Guadeloupe—that the northern colonies had already outstripped the islands as consumers of English commodities.

Of this fact Americans themselves were well aware. The question whether it was for the inter-

est of England to keep Canada or Guadeloupe, which was much discussed in 1760, called forth the notable pamphlet from Franklin, entitled *The Interest of Great Britain Considered*, in which he arranged in convenient form for the benefit of Englishmen certain statistics of trade. From these statistics it appeared that, whereas in 1748 English exports to the northern colonies and to the West Indies stood at some £830,000 and £730,000 respectively, ten years later the exports to the West Indies were still no more than £877,571 while those to the northern colonies had advanced to nearly two millions. Nor was it likely that this rate of increase would fall off in the future. "The trade to our northern colonies," said Franklin, "is not only greater but yearly increasing with the increase of the people. . . . The occasion for English goods in North America, and the inclination to have and use them, is and must be for ages to come, much greater than the ability of the people to buy them." For English merchants the prospect was therefore an inviting one; and if Canada rather than Guadeloupe was kept at the close of the war, it was because statesmen and economists were coming to estimate the value of colonies in terms of what they could buy, and not merely,

as of old, in terms of what they could sell. From this point of view, the superiority of the continental over the insular colonies was not to be doubted. Americans might well find great satisfaction in this disposition of the mother country to regard her continental colonies so highly and to think their trade of so much moment to her; all of which, nevertheless, doubtless inclined them sometimes to speculate on the delicate question whether, in case they were so important to the mother country, they were not perhaps more important to her than she was to them.

The consciousness of rapidly increasing material power, which was greatly strengthened by the last French war, did nothing to dull the sense of rights, but it was, on the contrary, a marked stimulus to the mind in formulating a plausible, if theoretical, justification of desired aims. Doubtless no American would say that being able to pay taxes was a good reason for not paying them, or that obligations might rightly be ignored as soon as one was in a position to do so successfully; but that he should not "lose his native rights" any American could more readily understand when he recalled that his ancestors had without assistance from the mother country transformed a wilderness into

populous and thriving communities whose trade was now becoming indispensable to Britain. Therefore, in the summer of 1764, before the doctrine of colonial rights had been very clearly stated or much refined, every American knew that the Sugar Act and also the proposed Stamp Act were grievously burdensome, and that in some way or other and for reasons which he might not be able to give with precision, they involved an infringement of essential English liberties. Most men in the colonies, at this early date, would doubtless have agreed with the views expressed in a letter written to a friend in England by Thomas Hutchinson of Boston, who was later so well hated by his compatriots for not having changed his views with the progress of events.

The colonists [said Hutchinson] claim a power of making laws, and a privilege of exemption from taxes, unless voted by their own representatives. . . . Nor are the privileges of the people less affected by duties laid for the sake of the money arising from them than by an internal tax. Not one tenth part of the people of Great Britain have a voice in the elections to Parliament; and, therefore, the colonies can have no claim to it; but every man of property in England may have his voice, if he will. Besides, acts of Parliament do not generally affect individuals, and every interest is

represented. But the colonies have an interest distinct from the interest of the nation; and shall the Parliament be at once party and judge? . . .

The nation treats her colonies as a father who should sell the services of his sons to reimburse him what they had cost him, but without the same reason; for none of the colonies, except Georgia and Halifax, occasioned any charge to the Crown or kingdom in the settlement of them. The people of New England fled for the sake of civil and religious liberty; multitudes flocked to America with this dependence, that their liberties should be safe. They and their posterity have enjoyed them to their content, and therefore have endured with greater cheerfulness all the hardships of settling new countries. No ill use has been made of these privileges; but the domain and wealth of Great Britain have received amazing addition. Surely the services we have rendered the nation have not subjected us to any forfeitures.

I know it is said the colonies are a charge to the nation, and they should contribute to their own defense and protection. But during the last war they annually contributed so largely that the Parliament was convinced the burden would be insupportable; and from year to year made them compensation; in several of the colonies for several years together more men were raised, in proportion, than by the nation. In the trading towns, one fourth part of the profit of trade, besides imposts and excise, was annually paid to the support of the war and public charges; in the country towns, a farm which would hardly rent for twenty pounds a year, paid ten pounds in taxes. If the in-

habitants of Britain had paid in the same proportion, there would have been no great increase in the national debt.

Nor is there occasion for any national expense in America. For one hundred years together the New England colonies received no aid in their wars with the Indians, assisted by the French. Those governments now molested are as able to defend their respective frontiers; and had rather do the whole of it by a tax of their own raising, than pay their proportion in any other way. Moreover, it must be prejudicial to the national interest to impose parliamentary taxes. The advantages promised by an increase of the revenue are all fallacious and delusive. You will lose more than you will gain. Britain already reaps the profit of all their trade, and of the increase of their substance. By cherishing their present turn of mind, you will serve your interest more than by your present schemes.

Thomas Hutchinson, or any other man, might write a private letter without committing his country, or, with due caution to his correspondent, even himself; but for effective public and official protest the colonial assemblies were the proper channels, and very expert they were in the business, after having for half a century and more devoted themselves with singleness of purpose to the guardianship of colonial liberties. Until now, liberties had been chiefly threatened by the insidious designs of colonial governors, who were for the



most part appointed by the Crown and very likely therefore to be infected with the spirit of prerogative than which nothing could be more dangerous, as everyone must know who recalled the great events of the last century. With those great events, the eminent men who directed the colonial assemblies — heads or scions or protégés of the best families in America, men of wealth and not without reading — were entirely familiar; they knew as well as any man that the liberties of Englishmen had been vindicated against royal prerogative only by depriving one king of his head and another of his crown; and they needed no instruction in the significance of the “glorious revolution,” the high justification of which was to be found in the political gospel of John Locke, whose book they had commonly bought and conveniently placed on their library shelves.

More often than not, it is true, colonial governors were but ordinary Englishmen with neither the instinct nor the capacity for tyranny, intent mainly upon getting their salaries paid and laying by a competence against the day when they might return to England. But if they were not kings, at least they had certain royal characteristics; and a certain flavor of despotism, clinging as it



were to their official robes and reviving in sensitive provincial minds the memory of bygone parliamentary battles, was an ever-present stimulus to the eternal vigilance which was well known to be the price of liberty.

And so, throughout the eighteenth century, little colonial aristocracies played their part, in imagination clothing their governors in the decaying vesture of old-world tyrants and themselves assuming the homespun garb, half Roman and half Puritan, of a virtuous republicanism. Small matters were thus stamped with great character. To debate a point of procedure in the Boston or Williamsburg assembly was not, to be sure, as high a privilege as to obstruct legislation in Westminster; but men of the best American families, fashioning their minds as well as their houses on good English models, thought of themselves, in withholding a governor's salary or limiting his executive power, as but reënacting on a lesser stage the great parliamentary struggles of the seventeenth century. It was the illusion of sharing in great events rather than any low mercenary motive that made Americans guard with jealous care their legislative independence; a certain hypersensitiveness in matters of taxation they knew to

be the virtue of men standing for liberties which Englishmen had once won and might lose before they were aware.

As a matter of course, therefore, the colonial assemblies protested against the measures of Grenville. The General Court of Massachusetts instructed its agent to say that the Sugar Act would ruin the New England fisheries upon which the industrial prosperity of the northern colonies depended. What they would lose was set down with some care, in precise figures: the fishing trade, "estimated at £164,000 per annum; the vessels employed in it, which would be nearly useless, at £100,000; the provisions used in it, the casks for packing fish, and other articles, at £22,700 and upwards: to all which there was to be added the loss of the advantage of sending lumber, horses, provisions, and other commodities to the foreign plantations as cargoes, the vessels employed to carry the fish to Spain and Portugal, the dismissing of 5,000 seamen from their employment," besides many other losses, all arising from the very simple fact that the British islands to which the trade of the colonies was virtually confined by the Sugar Act could furnish no sufficient market for the products of New England, to say nothing of

the middle colonies, nor a tithe of the molasses and other commodities now imported from the foreign islands in exchange.

Of the things taken in exchange, silver, in coin and bullion, was not the least important, since it was essential for the "remittances to England for goods imported into the provinces," remittances which during the last eighteen months, it was said, "had been made in specie to the amount of £150,000 besides £90,000 in Treasurer's bills for the reimbursement money." Any man must thus see, since even Governor Bernard was convinced of it, that the new duties would drain the colony of all its hard money, and so, as the Governor said, "There will be an end of the specie currency in Massachusetts." And with her trade half gone and her hard money entirely so, the old Bay colony would have to manufacture for herself those very commodities which English merchants were so desirous of selling in America.

The Sugar Act was thus made out to be, even from the point of view of English merchants, an economic blunder; but in the eyes of vigilant Bostonians it was something more, and much worse than an economic blunder. Vigilant Bostonians assembled in Town Meeting in May, 1764, in

order to instruct their representatives how they ought to act in these serious times; and knowing that they ought to protest but perhaps not knowing precisely on what grounds, they committed the drafting of their instructions to Samuel Adams, a middle-aged man who had given much time to the consideration of political questions, and above all to this very question of taxation, upon which he had wonderfully clarified his ideas by much meditation and the writing of effective political pieces for the newspapers.

Through the eyes of Samuel Adams, therefore, vigilant Bostonians saw clearly that the Sugar Act, to say nothing of the Stamp Act, was not only an economic blunder but a menace to political liberty as well. "If our trade may be taxed," so the instructions ran, "why not our lands? Why not the produce of our lands, and everything we possess or make use of? This we apprehend annihilates our charter right to govern and tax ourselves. It strikes at our British privileges which, as we have never forfeited them, we hold in common with our fellow-subjects who are natives of Great Britain. If taxes are laid upon us in any shape without our having a legal representative where they are laid, are we not reduced from the character of free sub-

jects to the miserable state of tributary slaves?" Very formidable questions, couched in high-sounding phrases, and representing well enough in form and in substance the state of mind of colonial assemblies in the summer of 1764 in respect to the Sugar Act and the proposed Stamp Act.

Yet these resounding phrases doubtless meant something less to Americans of 1764 than one is apt to suppose. The rights of freemen had so often, in the proceedings of colonial assemblies as well as in the newspaper communications of many a Brutus and Cato, been made to depend upon withholding a governor's salary or defining precisely how he should expend a hundred pounds or so, that moderate terms could hardly be trusted to cope with the serious business of parliamentary taxation. "Reduced from the character of free subjects to the miserable state of tributary slaves" was in fact hardly more than a conventional and dignified way of expressing a firm but entirely respectful protest.

The truth is, therefore, that while everyone protested in such spirited terms as might occur to him, few men in these early days supposed the new laws would not take effect, and fewer still counseled the right or believed in the practicability of forcible

resistance. "We yield obedience to the act granting duties," declared the Massachusetts Assembly. "Let Parliament lay what duties they please on us," said James Otis; "it is our duty to submit and patiently bear them till they be pleased to relieve us." Franklin assured his friends that the passage of the Stamp Act could not have been prevented any more easily than the sun's setting, recommended that they endure the one mischance with the same equanimity with which they faced the other necessity, and even saw certain advantages in the way of self-discipline which might come of it through the practice of a greater frugality. Not yet perceiving the dishonor attaching to the function of distributing stamps, he did his two friends, Jared Ingersoll of Connecticut and John Hughes of Pennsylvania, the service of procuring for them the appointment to the new office; and Richard Henry Lee, as good a patriot as any man and therefore of necessity at some pains later to explain his motives in the matter, applied for the position in Virginia.

Richard Henry Lee was no friend of tyrants, but an American freeman, less distinguished as yet than his name, which was a famous one and not without offense to be omitted from any list



of the Old Dominion's "best families." The best families of the Old Dominion, tide-water tobacco planters of considerable estates, admirers and imitators of the minor aristocracy of England, took it as a matter of course that the political fortunes of the province were committed to their care and for many generations had successfully maintained the public interest against the double danger of executive tyranny and popular licentiousness. It is therefore not surprising that the many obscure freeholders, minor planters, and lesser men who filled the House of Burgesses had followed the able leadership of that little coterie of inter-related families comprising the Virginia aristocracy. John Robinson, Speaker of the House and Treasurer of the colony, of good repute still in the spring of 1765, was doubtless the head and front of this aristocracy, the inner circle of which would also include Peyton Randolph, then King's Attorney, and Edmund Pendleton, well known for his cool persuasiveness in debate, the learned constitutional lawyer, Richard Bland, the sturdy and honest but ungraceful Robert Carter Nicholas, and George Wythe, noblest Roman of them all, steeped in classical lore, with the thin, sharp face of a Cæsar and for virtuous integrity a very



Cato. Conscious of their English heritage, they were at once proud of their loyalty to Britain and jealous of their well-won provincial liberties. As became British-American freemen, they had already drawn a proper Memorial against the Sugar Act and were now, as they leisurely gathered at Williamsburg in the early weeks of May, 1765, unwilling to protest again at present, for they had not as yet received any reply to their former dignified and respectful petition.

To this assembly of the burgesses in 1765, there came from the back-country beyond the first falls of the Virginia rivers, the frontier of that day, many deputies who must have presented, in dress and manners as well as in ideas, a sharp contrast to the eminent leaders of the aristocracy. Among them was Thomas Marshall, father of a famous son, and Patrick Henry, a young man of twenty-nine years, a heaven-born orator and destined to be the leader and interpreter of the silent "simple folk" of the Old Dominion. In Hanover County, in which this tribune of the people was born and reared and which he now represented, there were, as in all the back-country counties, few great estates and few slaves, no notable country-seats with pretension to archi-

tectural excellence, no modishly dressed aristocracy with leisure for reading and the cultivation of manners becoming a gentleman. Beyond the tide-water, men for the most part earned their bread by the sweat of their brows, lived the life and esteemed the virtues of a primitive society, and braced their minds with the tonic of Calvin's theology — a tonic somewhat tempered in these late enlightened days by a more humane philosophy and the friendly emotionalism of simple folk living close to nature.

Free burgesses from the back-country, set apart in dress and manners from the great planters, less learned and less practiced in oratory and the subtle art of condescension and patronage than the cultivated men of the inner circle, were nevertheless staunch defenders of liberty and American rights and were perhaps beginning to question, in these days of popular discussion, whether liberty could very well flourish among men whose wealth was derived from the labor of negro slaves, or be well guarded under all circumstances by those who, regarding themselves as superior to the general run of men, might be in danger of mistaking their particular interests for the common welfare. And indeed it now seemed that these great men who sent

their sons to London to be educated, who every year shipped their tobacco to England and bought their clothes of English merchants with whom their credit was always good, were grown something too timid, on account of their loyalty to Britain, in the great question of asserting the rights of America.

Jean Jacques Rousseau would have well understood Patrick Henry, one of those passionate temperaments whose reason functions not in the service of knowledge but of good instincts and fine emotions; a nature to be easily possessed of an exalted enthusiasm for popular rights and for celebrating the virtues of the industrious poor. This enthusiasm in the case of Patrick Henry was intensified by his own eloquence, which had been so effectively exhibited in the famous Parson's Cause, and in opposition to the shady scheme which the old leaders in the House of Burgesses had contrived to protect John Robinson, the Treasurer, from being exposed to a charge of embezzlement. Such courageous exploits, widely noised abroad, had won for the young man great applause and had got him a kind of party of devoted followers in the back-country and among the yeomanry and young men throughout the province, so that to take the lead and to stand boldly forth as the champion of lib-

erty and the submerged rights of mankind seemed to Patrick Henry a kind of mission laid upon him, in virtue of his heavenly gift of speech, by that Providence which shapes the destinies of men.

It was said that Mr. Henry was not learned in the law; but he had read in *Coke upon Littleton* that an Act of Parliament against Magna Carta, or common right, or reason, is void — which was clearly the case of the Stamp Act. On the flyleaf of an old copy of that book this unlearned lawyer accordingly wrote out some resolutions of protest which he showed to his friends, George Johnston and John Fleming, for their approval. Their approval once obtained, Mr. Johnston moved, with Mr. Henry as second, that the House of Burgesses should go into committee of the whole, “to consider the steps necessary to be taken in consequence of the resolutions . . . charging certain Stamp Duties in the colonies”; which was accordingly done on the 29th of May, upon which day Mr. Henry presented his resolutions.

The 29th of May was late in that session of the Virginia House of Burgesses; and most likely the resolutions would have been rejected if some two-thirds of the members, who knew nothing of Mr. Henry’s plans and supposed the business of the

Assembly finished, had not already gone home. Among those who had thus departed, it is not likely that there were many of Patrick Henry's followers. Yet even so there was much opposition. The resolutions were apparently refashioned in committee of the whole, for a preamble was omitted outright and four "Resolves" were made over into five which were presented to the House on the day following.

Young Mr. Jefferson, at that time a law student and naturally much interested in the business of lawmaking, heard the whole of this day's famous debate from the door of communication between the House and the lobby. The five resolutions, he afterwards remembered, were "opposed by Randolph, Bland, Pendleton, Nicholas, Wythe, and all the old members, whose influence in the House had, till then, been unbroken; . . . not from any question of our rights, but on the ground that the same sentiments had been, at their preceding session, expressed in a more conciliatory form, to which the answers were not yet received. But torrents of sublime eloquence from Mr. Henry, backed by the solid reasoning of Johnston, prevailed." It was in connection with the fifth resolution, upon which the debate was "most bloody,"

that Patrick Henry is said to have declared that "Tarquin and Cæsar had each his Brutus, Charles the First his Cromwell, and George the Third—"; upon which cries of "Treason" were heard from every part of the House. Treason or not, the resolution was carried, although by one vote only; and the young law student standing at the door of the House heard Peyton Randolph say, as he came hastily out into the lobby: "By God, I would have given 500 guineas for a single vote." And no doubt he would, at that moment, being then much heated.

Next day Mr. Randolph was probably much cooler; and so apparently were some others who, in the enthusiasm of debate and under the compelling eye of Patrick Henry, had voted for the last defiant resolution. Thinking the matter settled, Patrick Henry had already gone home "to recommend himself to his constituents," as his enemies thought, "by spreading treason."

But the matter was not yet settled. Early on that morning of the 31st, before the House assembled, the young law student who was so curious about the business of lawmaking saw Colonel Peter Randolph, of his Majesty's Council, standing at the Clerk's table, "thumbing over the volumes of jour-

nals to find a precedent for expunging a vote of the House." Whether the precedent was found the young law student did not afterwards recollect; but it is known that on motion of Peyton Randolph the fifth resolution was that day erased from the record. Mr. Henry was not then present. He had been seen, on the afternoon before, "passing along the street, on his way to his home in Louisa, clad in a pair of leather breeches, his saddle-bags on his arm, leading a lean horse."

The four resolutions thus adopted as the deliberate and formal protest of the Old Dominion were as mild and harmless as could well be. They asserted no more than that the first adventurers and settlers of Virginia brought with them and transmitted to their posterity all the privileges at any time enjoyed by the people of Great Britain; that by two royal charters they had been formally declared to be as surely possessed of these privileges as if they had been born and were then abiding within the realm; that the taxation of the people by themselves or by persons chosen by themselves to represent them "is the only security against a burthensome taxation, and the distinguishing characteristick of British freedom, without which the ancient constitution cannot



exist"; and that the loyal colony of Virginia had in fact without interruption enjoyed this inestimable right, which had never been forfeited or surrendered nor ever hitherto denied by the kings or the people of Britain. No treason here, expressed or implied; nor any occasion for 500 guineas passing from one hand to another to prove that the province of Virginia was still the ancient and loyal Old Dominion.

But Fate, or Providence, or whatever it is that presides at the destinies of nations, has a way of setting aside with ironical smile the most deliberate actions of men. And so, on this occasion, it turned out that the hard-won victory of Messrs. Randolph, Bland, Pendleton, and Wythe was of no avail. William Gordon tells us, without mentioning the source of his information, that "a manuscript of the unrevised resolves soon reached Philadelphia, having been sent off immediately upon their passing, that the earliest information of what had been done might be obtained by the Sons of Liberty." From Philadelphia a copy was forwarded, on June 17, to New York, in which loyal city the resolutions were thought "so treasonable that their possessors declined printing them"; but an Irish gentleman from Connecticut, who was

then in town, inquired after them and was with great precaution permitted to take a copy, which he straightway carried to New England. All this may be true or not; but certain it is that six resolutions purporting to come from Virginia were printed in the *Newport Mercury* on June 24, 1765, and afterwards, on July 1, in many Boston papers.

The document thus printed did not indeed include the famous fifth resolution upon which the debate in the House of Burgesses was "most bloody" and which had been there adopted by a single vote and afterwards erased from the record; but it included two others much stronger than that eminently treasonable one:

*Resolved*, That his Majesty's Liege people, the inhabitants of this colony, are not bound to yield obedience to any law or ordinance whatever, designed to impose any taxation whatsoever upon them, other than the laws and ordinances of the General Assembly aforesaid. *Resolved*, That any person who shall, by speaking or writing, assert or maintain that any person or persons, other than the General Assembly of this colony, have any right or power to impose any taxation on the people here, shall be deemed an enemy to his Majesty's colony.

These resolutions, which Governor Fauquier had not seen, and which were perhaps never debated

in the House of Burgesses, were now circulated far and wide as part of the mature decision of the Virginia Assembly. On the 14th of September, Messrs. Randolph, Wythe, and Nicholas were appointed a committee to apprise the Assembly's agent "of a spurious copy of the resolves of the last Assembly . . . being dispersed and printed in the News Papers and to send him a true copy of the votes on that occasion." In those days of slow and difficult communication, the truth, three months late, could not easily overtake the falsehood or ever effectively replace it.

In later years, when it was thought an honor to have begun the Revolution, many men denied the decisive effect of the Virginia Resolutions in convincing the colonists that the Stamp Act might be successfully resisted. But contemporaries were agreed in according them that glory or that infamy. "Two or three months ago," said Governor Bernard, "I thought that this people would submit to the Stamp Act. Murmurs were indeed continually heard, but they seemed to be such as would die away. The publishing the Virginia Resolutions proved an alarm-bell to the disaffected." We read the resolutions, said Jonathan Sewell, "with wonder. They savored of in-

dependence; they flattered the human passions; the reasoning was specious; we wished it conclusive. The transition to believing it so was easy, and we, almost all America, followed their example in resolving that the Parliament had no such right." And the good patriot John Adams, who afterwards attributed the honor to James Otis, said in 1776 that the "author of the first Virginia Resolutions against the Stamp Act . . . will have the glory with posterity of beginning . . . this great Revolution."<sup>1</sup>

James Otis in 1765 declared the Virginia Resolutions to be treasonable. It was precisely their treasonable flavor that electrified the country, while the fact that they came from the Old Dominion made men think that a union of the colonies, so essential to successful resistance, might

<sup>1</sup> Upon the death of George II., 1760, the collectors of the customs at Boston applied for new writs of assistance. The grant was opposed by the merchants, and the question was argued before the Superior Court. It was on this occasion that James Otis made a speech in favor of the rights of the colonists as men and Englishmen. All that is known of it is contained in some rough notes taken at the time by John Adams (*Works of John Adams*, ii., 125). An elaboration of these notes was printed in the *Massachusetts Spy*, April 29, 1773, and with corrections by Adams fifty years after the event in William Tudor's *Life of James Otis*, chs. 5-7. This is the speech to which Adams, at a later date, attributed the beginning of the Revolution.

be achieved in spite of all. The Old Dominion, counted the most English of the colonies in respect to her institutions and her sympathies, had a character for loyalty that, in any matter of opposition to Britain, gave double weight to her action. Easy-going tobacco-planters, Church of England men all, were well known not to be great admirers of the precise Puritans of New England, whose moral fervor and conscious rectitude seemed to them a species of fanaticism savoring more of canting hypocrisy than of that natural virtue affected by men of parts. Franklin may well have had Virginia and Massachusetts in mind when he said, but a few years earlier, no one need fear that the colonies "will unite against their own nation . . . which 'tis well known they all love much more than they love one another." Nor could anyone have supposed that the "Ancient and Loyal Colony of Virginia" would out-Boston Boston in asserting the rights of America. Yet this was what had come to pass, the evidence of which was the printed resolutions now circulating far and wide and being read in this month of July when it was being noised about that a Congress was proposed for the coming October. The proposal had in fact come from Massachusetts

Bay in the form of a circular letter inviting all the colonies to send delegates to New York for the purpose of preparing a loyal and humble "representation of their condition," and of imploring relief from the King and Parliament of Great Britain.

No very encouraging response was immediately forthcoming. The Assembly of New Jersey unanimously declined to send any delegates, although it declared itself "not without a just sensibility respecting the late acts of Parliament," and wished "such other colonies as think proper to be active every success they can loyally and reasonably desire." For two months there was no indication that any colony would think it "proper to be active"; but during August and September the assemblies of six colonies chose deputies to the congress, and when that body finally assembled in October, less formally designated representatives from three other colonies appeared upon the scene. The Assembly of New Hampshire declined to take part. Virginia, Georgia, and North Carolina were also unrepresented, which was perhaps due to the fact that the governors of those provinces refused to call the assemblies together to consider the Massachusetts circular letter.

Of the 27 members of the Stamp Act Congress, few if any were inclined to rash or venturesome measures. It is reported that Lord Melbourne, as Prime Minister of England, once remarked to his Cabinet, "It doesn't matter what we say, but we must all say the same thing." What the Stamp Act Congress said was to be sure of some importance, but that it should say something which all could agree to was of even greater importance. "There ought to be no New England man, no New Yorker, known on the continent," wrote Christopher Gadsden of South Carolina, "but all of us Americans." New Yorkers and New England men could not indeed be so easily transformed overnight; but the Stamp Act Congress was significant as marking a kind of beginning in that slow and difficult process. After eleven days of debate, in which sharp differences of opinion were no doubt revealed, a declaration of rights and grievances was at last adopted; a declaration which was so cautiously and loyally phrased that all could subscribe to it, and which was perhaps for that very reason not quite satisfactory to anyone.

His Majesty's subjects in the colonies, the declaration affirmed, are entitled to those "inherent rights and liberties" which are enjoyed by "his



natural born subjects" in Great Britain; among which rights is that most important one of "not being taxed without their own consent"; and since the people of the colonies, "from local circumstances, cannot be represented in the House of Commons," it follows that taxes cannot be "imposed upon them, but by their respective legislatures." The Stamp Act, being a direct tax, was therefore declared to have a "manifest tendency to subvert the rights and liberties of the colonies." Of the Sugar Act, which was not a direct tax, so much could not be said; but this act was at least "burthensome and grievous," being subversive of trade if not of liberty. No one was likely to be profoundly stirred by the declaration of the Stamp Act Congress, in this month of October when the spirited Virginia Resolutions were everywhere well known.

"The frozen politicians of a more northern government," according to the *Boston Gazette*, "say they [the people of Virginia] have spoken treason"; but the *Boston Gazette*, for its part, thought they had "spoken very sensibly." With much reading of the resolutions and of the commendatory remarks with which they were everywhere received, the treasonable flavor of their

boldest phrases no doubt grew less pronounced, and high talk took on more and more the character of good sense. During the summer of 1765 the happy phrase of Isaac Barré — “these sons of liberty” — was everywhere repeated, and was put on as a kind of protective coloring by strong patriots, who henceforth thought of themselves as Sons of Liberty and no traitors at all. Rather were they traitors who would in any way justify an act of tyranny; most of all those so-called Americans, accepting the office of Stamp Master, who cunningly aspired to make a farthing profit out of the hateful business of enslaving their own countrymen.

Who these gentry might be was not certainly known until early August, when Jared Ingersoll, himself as it turned out one of the miscreants, brought the commissions over from London, whereupon the names were all printed in the papers. It then appeared that the gentleman appointed to distribute the stamps in Massachusetts was Andrew Oliver, a man very well connected in that province and of great influence with the best people, not infrequently entrusted with high office and perquisites, and but recently elected by the unsuspecting Bostonians to represent them in the council of Massachusetts Bay Colony. It seemed inconsis-

tent that a man so often honored by the people should meanwhile pledge himself to destroy their liberties; and so on the morning of the 14th of August, Mr. Oliver's effigy, together with a horned devil's head peeping out of an old boot, was to be seen hanging from the Liberty Tree at the south end of Boston, near the distillery of Thomas Chase, brewer and warm Son of Liberty. During the day people stopped to make merry over the spectacle; and in the evening, after work hours, a great crowd gathered to see what would happen. When the effigy was cut down and carried away, the crowd very naturally followed along through the streets and through the Town House, justifying themselves — many respectable people were in the crowd — for being there by calling out, "Liberty and Property forever; no Stamp." And what with tramping and shouting in the warm August evening, the whole crowd became much heated and ever more enthusiastic, so that, the line of march by some chance lying past the new stamp office and Mr. Oliver's house, the people were not to be restrained from destroying the former and breaking in the windows of the latter, in detestation of the hated Stamp Act and of the principle that property might be taken without consent.

Mr. Oliver hastened to resign his office, which doubtless led many people to think the methods taken to induce him to do so were very good ones and such as might well be made further use of. It was in fact not long afterwards, about dusk of the evening of the 26th of August, that a mob of men, more deliberately organized than before, ransacked the office of William Story, Deputy Registrar of the Court of Admiralty, and, after burning the obnoxious records kept there, they forcibly entered the house, and the cellar too, of Benjamin Hallowell, Comptroller of the Customs. "Then the Monsters," says Deacon Tudor, "being enflam'd with Rum & Wine which they got in sd. Hallowell's cellar, proceeded with Shouts to the Dwelling House of the Hon-l. Thos. Hutchinson, Esq., Lieut. Governor, & enter'd in a voyalent manner." At that moment the Lieutenant-Governor was sitting comfortably at dinner and had barely time to escape with his family before the massive front door was broken in with axes. As young Mr. Hutchinson went out by the back way he heard someone say: "Damn him, he's upstairs, we'll have him yet." They did not indeed accomplish this purpose; but when the morning broke the splendid house was seen to be completely gutted,

the partition walls broken in, the roof partly off, and the priceless possessions of the owner ruined past repair: mahogany and walnut furniture finished in morocco and crimson damask, tapestries and Turkey carpets, rare paintings, cabinets of fine glass and old china, stores of immaculate linen, India paduasoy gowns and red Genoa robes, a choice collection of books richly bound in leather and many manuscript documents, the fruit of thirty years' labor in collecting — all broken and cut and cast about to make a rubbish heap and a bonfire. From the mire of the street there was afterwards picked up a manuscript history of Massachusetts which is preserved to this day, the soiled pages of which may still be seen in the Boston library. Mr. Hutchinson was no friend of the Stamp Act; but he was a rich man, Lieutenant-Governor of the province, and brother-in-law of Andrew Oliver.

Government offered the usual rewards — which were never claimed — for evidence leading to the detection of any persons concerned in the riots. Men of repute, including the staunchest patriots such as Samuel Adams and Jonathan Mayhew, expressed their abhorrence of mobs and of all licentious proceedings in general; but many were

nevertheless disposed to think, with good Deacon Tudor, that in this particular instance "the universal Obhorrance of the Stamp Act was the cause of the Mob's riseing." It would be well to punish the mob, but punishing the mob would not cure the evil which was the cause of the mob; for where there was oppression the lower sort of people, as was well known, would be sure to express opposition in the way commonly practiced by them everywhere, in London as well as in Boston, by gathering in the streets in crowds, in which event some deplorable excesses were bound to follow, however much deprecated by men of substance and standing. If ministers wished the people to be tranquil, let them repeal the Stamp Act; if they were determined to persist in it, and should attempt to land and distribute the stamps, loyal and law-abiding citizens, however much they might regret the fact, could only say that similar disorders were very likely to become even more frequent and more serious in the future than they had been in the past.

As the first of November approached, that being the day set for the levying of the tax, attention and discussion came naturally to center on the stamps rather than on the Stamp Act. Crowds of

curious people gathered wherever there seemed a prospect of catching a glimpse of the bundles of stamped papers. Upon their arrival the papers had to be landed; they could therefore be seen; and the mere sight of them was likely to be a sufficient challenge to action. It seemed a simple matter to resist a law which could be of no effect without the existence of certain papers, paper being a substance easily disposed of. And everywhere in fact the stamps were disposed of — disposed of by mobs, with the tacit consent and impalpable encouragement of many men who, having a reputable position to maintain, would themselves by no means endure to be seen in a common crowd; men of good estate whom no one could think of as countenancers of violence, but who were, on this occasion, as Mr. Livingston said, “not averse to a little rioting” on condition that it be kept within bounds and well directed to the attainment of their just rights.

A little rioting, so easy to be set on foot, was difficult to keep within reasonable bounds, as Mr. Livingston and his friends in New York soon discovered, somewhat to their chagrin. In New York, even after the stamps were surrendered by Lieutenant-Governor Colden and safely lodged in the



Town House, there were many excesses wholly unnecessary to the attainment of the original object. Mr. Colden's new chariot, certainly never designed to carry the stamps, was burned; and on repeated occasions windows were broken and "particulars" threatened that their houses would presently be pulled down. Mr. Livingston was himself the owner of houses, had an immense respect for property rights and for the law that guaranteed them, and therefore wished very much that the lower sort of people would give over their mobbish practices now that the stamps had been disposed of. Since the law could not now operate without stamps, what more was necessary except to wait in good order, patiently denying themselves those activities that involved a violation of the law, until the law should be repealed? The Stamp Act Congress had protested in a proper and becoming manner; merchants had agreed not to import British goods; the Governor had closed the courts. Stopping of business would doubtless be annoying and might very likely produce some distress. But it would be legal and it would be effective: the government would get no revenue; British merchants no profit; and Americans could not be charged with violating a law the failure of which

was primarily due to the fact that papers indispensable to its application were, for one reason or another, not forthcoming.

Mr. Livingston, happily possessed of the conservative temperament, was disposed to achieve desired ends with the least possible disturbance of his own affairs and those of his country; and most men of independent means, landowners and merchants of considerable estates, moneyed men and high salaried officials whose incomes were not greatly affected by any temporary business depression, were likely to be of Mr. Livingston's opinion, particularly in this matter of the Stamp Act. Sitting comfortably at dinner every day and well knowing where they could lay hands on money to pay current bills, they enjoyed a high sense of being defenders of liberty and at the same time eminently law-abiding citizens. They professed a decided preference for nullifying the Stamp Act without violating it. Sitting at dinner over their wine, they swore that they would let ships lie in harbor and rot there if necessary, and would let the courts close for a year or two years, rather than employ taxed papers to collect their just debts; with a round oath they bound themselves to it, sealing the pledge, very likely, by sipping

another glass of Madeira. In the defense of just rights, Mr. Livingston and his conservative friends were willing to sacrifice much: they foresaw some months of business stagnation, which they nevertheless contemplated with equanimity, being prepared to tide over the dull time by living in a diminished manner, if necessary even dispensing with customary bottles of Madeira at dinner.

Men of radical temperament, having generally less regard for the *status quo*, are quick to see ulterior motives back of conservative timidity and solemn profession of respect for law and order. It was so in the case of the Stamp Act. Small shopkeepers who were soon sold out and had no great stock of "old moth-eaten goods" to offer at enhanced prices, rising young lawyers whose fees ceased with the closing of the courts, artisans and laborers who bought their dinners (no Madeira included) with their daily wage — these, and indeed all the lower sort of people, contemplated the stopping of business with much alarm. Mr. John Adams, a young lawyer of Braintree and Boston, was greatly interested in the question of the courts of justice. Were the courts to be closed on the ground that no legal business could be done without stamped papers? Or were they

to go on trying cases, enforcing the collection of debts, and probating wills precisely as if no Stamp Act had ever been heard of? The Boston superior court was being adjourned continuously, for a fortnight at a time, through the influence of Messrs. Hutchinson and Oliver, to the great and steadily rising wrath of young Mr. Adams. The courts must soon be opened, he said to himself; their inactivity "will make a large chasm in my affairs, if it should not reduce me to distress." Young Mr. Adams, who had, no less than Mr. Oliver, a family to support and children to provide for, was just at the point of making a reputation and winning a competence "when this execrable project was set on foot for my ruin as well as that of America in general." And therefore Mr. Adams, and Mr. Samuel Adams, and Mr. Otis, and Mr. Gridley, in order to avert the ruin of America in general, were "very warm" to have the courts open and very bitter against Messrs. Hutchinson and Oliver whose "insolence and impudence and chicanery" in the matter were obvious, and whose secret motives might easily be inferred. Little wonder if these men, who had managed by hook or crook to get into their own hands or into the hands of their families nearly all the lucrative

offices in the province, now sought to curry favor with ministers in order to maintain their amazing ascendancy!

When the Stamp Act was passed, all men in America had professed themselves, and were thought to be, Sons of Liberty. Even Mr. Hutchinson had declared himself against ministerial measures. But scarce a month had elapsed since the law was to have gone into effect before it was clear to the discerning that, for all their professions, most of the "better sort" were not genuine Sons of Liberty at all, but timid sycophants, pliant instruments of despotism, far more intent upon the ruin of Mr. Adams and of America in general than any minister could be shown to be. For the policy of dispensing with activities requiring stamped papers, much lauded by these gentry as an effective and constitutional means of defeating the law, was after all nothing but "a sort of admittance of the legality of the Stamp Act, and had a tendency to enforce it, since there was just reason to apprehend that the secret enemies of liberty had actually a design to introduce it by the necessity to which the people would be reduced by the cessation of business." It was well, therefore, in view of such insidious designs of secret enemies, that the people,

even to the lowest ranks, should become "more attentive to their liberties, and more inquisitive about them, and more determined to defend them, than they were ever before known or had occasion to be."

To defend their liberties, not against ministers but against ministerial tools, who were secret betrayers of America, true patriots accordingly banded themselves in societies which took to themselves the name of Sons of Liberty and of which the object was, by "putting business in motion again, in the usual channels, without stamps," to prevent the Stamp Act ever being enforced. Such a society composed mainly of the lower orders of people and led by rising young lawyers, was formed in New York. On January 7, at Mr. Howard's coffee house, abandoning the secrecy which had hitherto veiled their activities, its members declared to the world their principles and the motives that would determine their action in the future:

*Resolved:* That we will go to the last extremity and venture our lives and fortunes effectively to prevent the said Stamp Act from ever taking place in this city and province; *Resolved:* That any person who shall deliver out or receive any instrument of writing upon stamped paper . . . shall incur the highest resentment

of this society, and be branded with everlasting infamy; *Resolved*: That the people who carry on business as formerly on unstamped paper . . . shall be protected to the utmost power of this society.

Malicious men said that the Sons of Liberty were "much concerned that the gentlemen of fortune don't publically join them," for which reason the society "formed a committee of correspondence with the Liberty Boys in the neighboring provinces." In February, the society did in fact appoint such a committee, which sent out letters to all the counties of New York and to all the colonies except Georgia, proposing the formation of an intercolonial association of the true Sons of Liberty; to which letters many replies were received, some of which are still preserved among the papers of the secretary, Mr. John Lamb. The general sense of these letters was that an intercolonial association and close correspondence were highly necessary in view of the presence, in nearly every colony, of many "secret and inveterate enemies of liberty," and of the desirability of keeping "a watchful eye over all those who, from the nature of their offices, vocations, or dispositions, may be the most likely to introduce the use of stamped paper, to the total subversion of the British constitution."



No doubt the society kept its watchful eye on every unusual activity and all suspicious characters, but to what extent it succeeded in "putting business in motion again, in the usual channels, without stamps," cannot be said. Both before and after the society was founded, much business was carried on in violation of the law: newspapers and pamphlets continued to flourish in the land; the inferior courts at least were sooner or later opened in nearly every colony; and not infrequently unstamped clearance papers were issued to shipmasters willing to take the risk of seizure in London or elsewhere. Mr. John Hancock, easily persuading himself that there should be no risk, shipped a cargo of oil with the Boston packet in December. "I am under no apprehensions," he wrote his London agent. "Should there be any Difficulty in London as to Marshall's clearance, You will please to represent the circumstances that no stamps could be obtained, . . . in which case I think I am to be justified, & am not liable to a seizure, or even run any risque at all, as I have taken the Step of the Law, and made application for clearance, & can get no other."

Notwithstanding such practices, which were frequent enough, it was a dull winter, with little profit

flowing into the coffers of Mr. Hancock, with low wages or none at all for worthy artisans and laborers; so that it must often have seemed, as Governor Moore said, "morally impossible that the people here can subsist any time under such inconveniences as they have brought on themselves." Such inconveniences became more irksome as time passed, with the result that, during the cold and dreary months of February and March, it became every day a more pressing question, particularly for the poor, to know whether the bad times would end at last in the repeal or the admission of the tyrannical act.

Confronted with this difficult dilemma, the faithful Sons of Liberty were preparing in April to assemble a continental congress as a last resort, when rumors began to spread that Parliament was on the point of carrying the repeal. The project of a congress was accordingly abandoned, and everywhere recrimination gave place to rejoicing. On April 21, 1766, the vigilant Boston Sons voted that when the rumors should be confirmed they would celebrate the momentous event in a befitting manner — would celebrate it "Under the deepest Sense of Duty and Loyalty to our Most Gracious Sovereign King George, and in respect

and Gratitude to the Patriotic Ministry, Mr. Pitt, and the Glorious Majority of both Houses of Parliament, by whose Influence, under Divine Providence, against a most strenuous Opposition, a happy Repeal of the Stamp Act, so unconstitutional as well as Grievous to His Majesty's good Subjects of America, is attained; whereby our incontestible Right of Internal Taxation remains to us inviolate."

## CHAPTER IV

### DEFINING THE ISSUE

A pepper-corn, in acknowledgement of the right, is of more value than millions without it. — *George Grenville*.

A perpetual jealousy respecting liberty, is absolutely requisite in all free states. — *John Dickinson*.

Good Americans everywhere celebrated the repeal of the Stamp Act with much festivity and joyful noises in the streets, and with “genteel entertainments” in taverns, where innumerable toasts were drunk to Liberty and to its English defenders. Before his house on Beacon Hill, Mr. John Hancock, on occasion a generous man, erected a platform and placed there a pipe of Madeira which was broached for all comers. At Colonel Ingersoll’s, where twenty-eight gentlemen attended to take dinner, fifteen toasts were drunk, “and very loyal they were, and suited to the occasion”; upon which occasion, we are told, Mr. Hancock again “treated every person with cheerfulness.” Throughout the land men with literary gifts, or

instincts, delivered themselves of vigorous free verse, founded upon the antithesis of Freedom and Tyranny, and enforcing the universal truth that "in the unequal war Oppressors fall, the hate, contempt, and endless curse of all." In New York, on the occasion of the King's birthday, an ox was roasted whole in the Fields, and twenty kegs of beer were opened for a great dinner at the King's Arms; and afterwards, through the generosity of the Assembly of that province, there was erected on the Bowling Green a mounted statue—made of lead but without present intention of being turned into bullets—representing His Majesty King George the Third, of ever glorious memory, the Restorer of Liberty.

The joyful Americans could not know how little King George aspired to be thought the Restorer of Liberty. In reality he was extremely sulky in his silent, stubborn way over the repeal of the Stamp Act, and vexed most particularly at the part which he himself had been forced to play in it. The idea of a Patriot King, conceived by Lord Bolingbroke (one-time Jacobite exile) and instilled into the mind of the young Hanoverian monarch by an ambitious mother, had little to do with liberty, either British or colonial, but

had much to do with authority. The Patriot King was to be a king indeed, seeking advice of all virtuous men of whatever connections, without being bound by any man or faction of men. It was not to restore liberty, nor yet to destroy it, but to destroy factions, that the King was ambitious; and for this purpose he desired a ministry that would do his bidding without too much question. If Mr. Grenville did not satisfy His Majesty, it was not on account of the Stamp Act, in respect to which the King was wholly of Mr. Grenville's opinion that it was a just law and ought to be enforced. In July, 1765, when Mr. Grenville was dismissed, there had indeed as yet been no open resistance in America; and if the King had been somewhat annoyed by the high talk of his loyal subjects in Virginia, he had been annoyed much more by Mr. Grenville, who was disposed, in spite of his outward air of humility and solemn protestations of respect, to be very firm with His Majesty in the matter of ministerial prerogative, reading him from time to time carefully prepared pedantic little curtain lectures on the customs of the Constitution and the duties of kings under particular circumstances.

Unable to endure Mr. Grenville longer, the King

turned to Mr. Pitt. This statesman, although extremely domineering in the House, was much subdued in the presence of his sovereign, and along with many defects had one great virtue in his Majesty's eyes, which was that he shared the King's desire to destroy the factions. The King was accordingly ready to receive the Great Commoner, even though he insisted on bringing "the Constitution," and Earl Temple into the bargain, with him to St. James's Palace. But when it appeared that Earl Temple was opposed to the repeal of the Stamp Act, Mr. Pitt declined after all to come to St. James's on any terms, even with his beloved Constitution; whereupon the harassed young King, rather than submit again to Mr. Grenville's lectures, surrendered himself, temporarily, to the old-line Whigs under the lead of the Marquis of Rockingham. In all the negotiations which ended in this unpromising arrangement of the King's business, the Stamp Act had apparently not been once mentioned; except that Mr. Grenville, upon retiring, had ventured to say to His Majesty, as a kind of abbreviated parting homily, that if "any man ventured to defeat the regulations laid down for the colonies, by a slackness in the execution, he [Mr. Grenville] should



look upon him as a criminal and the betrayer of his country."

The Marquis of Rockingham and his friends had no intention of betraying their country. They had, perhaps, when they were thus accidentally lifted to power, no very definite intentions of any sort. Respecting the Stamp Act, as most alarming reports began to come in from America, His Majesty's Opposition, backed by the landed interest and led by Mr. Grenville and the Duke of Bedford, knew its mind much sooner than ministers knew theirs. America was in open rebellion, they said, and so far from doing anything about it ministers were not even prepared, four months after disturbances began, to lay necessary information before the House. Under pressure of such talk, the Marquis of Rockingham had to make up his mind. It would be odd and contrary to well-established precedent for ministers to adopt a policy already outlined by Opposition; and in view of the facts that good Whig tradition, even if somewhat obscured in latter days, committed them to some kind of liberalism, that the City and the mercantile interest thought Mr. Grenville's measures disastrous to trade, and that they were much in need of Mr. Pitt's elo-

quence to carry them through, ministers at last, in January, 1766, declared for the repeal.

Now that it was a question of repealing Mr. Grenville's measures, serious attention was given to them; and honorable members, in the notable debate of 1766, learned much about America and the rights of Englishmen which they had not known before. Lord Mansfield, the most eminent legal authority in England, argued that the Stamp Act was clearly within the power of Parliament, while Lord Camden, whose opinion was by no means to be despised, staked his reputation that the law was unconstitutional. Mr. Grenville, in his precise way, laid it down as axiomatic that since "Great Britain protects America, America is therefore bound to yield obedience"; if not, he desired to know when Americans were emancipated. Whereupon Mr. Pitt, springing up, desired to know when they were made slaves. The Great Commoner rejoiced that America had resisted, and expressed the belief that three millions of people so dead to all the feelings of liberty as voluntarily to submit to be made slaves would be very fit instruments to make slaves of all Englishmen.

Honorable members were more disposed to lis-

ten to Mr. Pitt than to vote with him; and were doubtless less influenced by his hot eloquence than by the representations of English merchants to the effect that trade was being ruined by Mr. Grenville's measures. Sir George Seville, honorable member for Yorkshire, spoke the practical mind of business men when he wrote to Lord Rockingham: "Our trade is hurt; what the devil have you been doing? For our part, we don't pretend to understand your politics and American matters, but our trade is hurt: pray remedy it, and a plague of you if you won't." This was not so eloquent as Mr. Pitt's speech, but still very eloquent in its way and more easily followed than Mr. Pitt's theory that "taxation is no part of the governing or legislative power."

Constitutional arguments, evenly balanced pro and con, were not certain to change many minds, while such brief statements as that of Sir George Seville, although clearly revealing the opinion of that gentleman, did little to enlighten the House on the merits of the question. That members might have every opportunity to inform themselves about America, the ministers thought it worth while to have Benjamin Franklin of Philadelphia, printer and Friend of the Human

Race, brought before the bar of the House to make such statements of fact or opinion as might be desired of him. The examination was a long one; the questions very much to the point; the replies very ready and often more to the point than the questions. With much exact information the provincial printer maintained that the colonists, having taxed themselves heavily in support of the last war, were not well able to pay more taxes, and that, even if they were abundantly able, the sugar duties and the stamp tax were improper measures. The stamps, in remote districts, would frequently require more in postage to obtain than the value of the tax. The sugar duties had already greatly diminished the volume of colonial trade, while both the duties and the tax, having to be paid in silver, were draining America of its specie and thus making it impossible for merchants to import from England to the same extent as formerly. It was well known that at the moment Americans were indebted to English merchants to the amount of several million pounds sterling, which they were indeed willing, as English merchants themselves said, but unable to pay. Necessarily, therefore, Americans were beginning to manufacture their own cloth, which they could

very well do. Before their old clothes were worn out they "would have new ones of their own making."

Against the Stamp Act, honorable members were reminded, there was a special objection to be urged. It was thought with good reason to be unconstitutional, which would make its application difficult, if not impossible. Troops might no doubt be sent to enforce it, but troops would find no enemy to contend with, no men in arms; they would find no rebellion in America, although they might indeed create one. Pressed by Mr. Townshend to say whether the colonies might not, on the ground of Magna Carta, as well deny the validity of external as internal taxes, the Doctor was not ready to commit himself on that point. It was true many arguments had lately been used in England to show Americans that, if Parliament has no right to tax them internally, it has none to tax them externally, or to make any other law to bind them; in reply to which, he could only say that "at present they do not reason so, but in time they may possibly be convinced by these arguments."

Whether the Parliament was truly enlightened and resolved by statistical information and lofty

constitutional argument is not certainly known; but it is known that the King, whose steady mind did not readily change, was still opposed to the repeal, a fact supposed to be not without influence in unsettling the opinions of some honorable members. Lord Mansfield had discreetly advised His Majesty that although it was contrary to the spirit of the constitution to "endeavour by His Majesty's name to carry questions in Parliament, yet where the lawful rights of the King and Parliament were to be asserted and maintained, he thought the making His Majesty's opinion in support of those rights to be known, was very fit and becoming."

The distinction was subtle, but perhaps not too subtle for a great lawyer. It was apparently not too subtle for a Patriot King, since certain noble lords who could be counted on to know the King's wishes conveyed information to the proper persons that those who found it against their conscience to vote for the repeal would not for that reason be received coldly at St. James's Palace. In order to preserve the constitution as well as to settle the question of the repeal on its merits, Lord Rockingham and the Earl of Shelburne obtained an interview with the King at

which they pointed out to him the manifest irregularity of such a procedure, and in addition expressed their conviction that, on account of the high excitement in the City, failure to repeal the Stamp Act would be attended with very serious consequences. Whether to preserve the Constitution, or to allow the repeal to be determined on its merits, or for some other reason, the King at last gave in writing his consent to the ministers' measure. On February 22, by a vote of 275 to 167, Mr. Conway was given leave to bring in the bill for a total repeal of the Stamp Act. The bill was accordingly brought in, passed by both houses, and on March 18 assented to by the King.

In the colonies the repeal was thought to be a victory for true principles of government, at least a tacit admission by the mother country that the American interpretation of the Constitution was the correct one. No Englishman denied that the repeal was an American victory; and there were some, like Pitt and Camden, who preferred the constitutional theories of Daniel Dulaney<sup>1</sup> to those of George Grenville. But most Englishmen

<sup>1</sup> Daniel Dulaney, of Maryland, was the author of a pamphlet entitled *Considerations on the Propriety of Imposing Taxes on the British Colonies*. Pitt, in his speech on the repeal of the Stamp Act, referred to this pamphlet as a masterly performance.



who took the trouble to have any views on such recondite matters, having in general a poor opinion of provincial logic, easily dismissed the whole matter with the convincing phrase of Charles Townshend that the distinction between internal and external taxes was "perfect nonsense." The average Briton, taking it for granted that all the subtle legal aspects of the question had been thoroughly gone into by Lord Mansfield, was content to read Mr. Soame Jenyns, a writer of verse and member of the Board of Trade, who in a leisure hour had recently turned his versatile mind to the consideration of colonial rights with the happiest results. In twenty-three very small pages he had disposed of the "Objections to the Taxation of Our American Colonies" in a manner highly satisfactory to himself and doubtless also to the average reading Briton, who understood constitutional questions best when they were "briefly considered," and when they were humorously expounded in pamphlets that could be had for sixpence.

Having a logical mind, Mr. Jenyns easily perceived that taxes could be objected to on two grounds: the ground of right and the ground of expediency. In his opinion the right of Parlia-

ment to lay taxes on America and the expediency of doing so at the present moment were propositions so clear that any man, in order not to bring his intelligence in question, needed to apologize for undertaking to defend them. Mr. Jenyns wished it known that he was not the man to carry owls to Athens, and that he would never have thought it necessary to prove either the right or the expediency of taxing our American colonies, "had not many arguments been lately flung out . . . which with insolence equal to their absurdity deny them both." With this conciliatory preliminary disclaimer of any lack of intelligence on his own part, Mr. Jenyns proceeded to point out, in his most happy vein, how unsubstantial American reasoning really appeared when, brushing aside befogging irrelevancies, you once got to the heart of the question.

The heart of the question was the proposition that there should be no taxation without representation; upon which principle it was necessary to observe only that many individuals in England, such as copyholders and leaseholders, and many communities, such as Manchester and Birmingham, were taxed in Parliament without being represented there. If Americans quoted you "Lock, Sidney,

Selden, and many other great names to prove that every Englishman . . . is still represented in Parliament," he would only ask why, since Englishmen are all represented in Parliament, are not all Americans represented in exactly the same way? Either Manchester is not represented or Massachusetts is. "Are Americans not British subjects? Are they not Englishmen? Or are they only Englishmen when they solicit protection, but not Englishmen when taxes are required to enable this country to protect them?" Americans said they had Assemblies of their own to tax them, which was a privilege granted them by charter, without which "that liberty which every Englishman has a right to is torn from them, they are all slaves, and all is lost." Colonial charters were, however, "undoubtedly no more than those of all corporations, which empower them to make bye-laws." As for "liberty," the word had so many meanings, "having within a few years been used as a synonymous term for Blasphemy, Bawdy, Treason, Libels, Strong Beer, and Cyder," that Mr. Jenyns could not presume to say what it meant.

Against the expediency of the taxes, Mr. Jenyns found that two objections had been raised: that the time was improper and the manner wrong.

As to the manner, the colonies themselves had in a way prescribed it, since they had not been able at the request of ministers to suggest any other. The time Mr. Jenyns thought most propitious, a point upon which he grew warm and almost serious.

Can any time be more proper to require some assistance from our colonies, to preserve to themselves their present safety, than when this country is almost undone by procuring it? Can any time be more proper to impose some tax upon their trade, than when they are enabled to rival us in their manufactures by the encouragement and protection which we have given them? Can any time be more proper to oblige them to settle handsome incomes on their governors, than when we find them unable to procure a subsistence on any other terms than those of breaking all their instructions, and betraying the rights of their Sovereign? . . . Can there be a more proper time to force them to maintain an army at their expence, than when that army is necessary for their own protection, and we are utterly unable to support it? Lastly, can there be a more proper time for this mother country to leave off feeding out of her own vitals these children whom she has nursed up, than when they are arrived at such strength and maturity as to be well able to provide for themselves, and ought rather with filial duty to give some assistance to her distresses?

Americans, after all, were not the only ones who might claim to have a grievance!

It was upon a lighter note, not to end in anticlimax, that Mr. Jenyns concluded his able pamphlet. He had heard it hinted that allowing the colonies representation in Parliament would be a simple plan for making taxes legal. The impracticability of this plan, he would not go into, since the plan itself had nowhere been seriously pressed, but he would, upon that head, offer the following consideration:

I have lately seen so many specimens of the great powers of speech of which these American gentlemen are possessed, that I should be much afraid that the sudden importation of so much eloquence at once would greatly endanger the safety of the government of this country. . . . If we can avail ourselves of these taxes on no other condition, I shall never look upon it as a measure of frugality, being perfectly satisfied that in the end, it will be much cheaper for us to pay their army than their orators.

Mr. Jenyns's pamphlet, which could be had for sixpence, was widely read, with much appreciation for its capital wit and extraordinary common sense; more widely read in England than Mr. James Otis's *Rights of the British Colonies Asserted and Proved* or Daniel Dulaney's *Considerations on the Propriety of Imposing Taxes on the British Colo-*

*nies*; and it therefore did much more than these able pamphlets to clarify English opinion on the rights of Parliament and the expediency of taxing America. No one could deny that Government had yielded in the face of noisy clamor and forcible resistance. To yield under the circumstances may have been wise or not; but Government had not yielded on any ground of right, but had on the contrary most expressly affirmed, in the Declaratory Act, that "the King's Majesty, by and with the advice of the lords spiritual and temporal, and commons of Great Britain, in Parliament assembled, had, hath, and of right ought to have, full power and authority to make such laws and statutes of sufficient force and validity to bind the colonies and people of America, subjects of the Crown of Great Britain, in all cases whatsoever." Government had not even denied the expediency of taxing America, the total repeal of the Stamp Act and the modification of the Sugar Act having been carried on a consideration of the inexpediency of these particular taxes only. Taxes not open to the same objection might in future be found, and doubtless must be found, inasmuch as the troops were still retained in America and the Quartering Act continued in

force there. For new taxes, however, it would doubtless be necessary to await the formation of a new ministry.

The formation of a new ministry was not an unusual occurrence in the early years of King George the Third. No one supposed that Lord Rockingham could hold on many months; and as early as July, 1766, all London knew that Mr. Pitt had been sent for. The coming and going of great men in times of ministerial crisis was always a matter of interest; but the formation of that ministry of all the factions which the Patriot King had long desired was something out of the ordinary, the point of greatest speculation being how many irreconcilables Mr. Pitt (the Earl of Chatham he was now) could manage to get seated about a single table. From the point of view of irreconcilability, no one was more eligible than Mr. Charles Townshend, at that moment Paymaster of the Forces, a kind of *enfant terrible* of English politics, of whom Horace Walpole could say, with every likelihood of being believed, that "his speech of last Friday, made while half drunk, was all wit and indiscretion; nobody but he could have made it, nobody but he would have made it if he could. He beat Lord Chatham in language, Burke in meta-



phors, Grenville in presumption, Rigby in impudence, himself in folly, and everybody in good humour."

This gentleman, much to his astonishment, one day received the following note from Lord Chatham: "Sir: You are too great a magnitude not to be in a responsible place; I intend to propose you for Chancellor of the Exchequer, and must desire to have your answer by nine o'clock tonight." Mr. Townshend was dismayed as well as astonished, his dismay arising from the fact that the office of Chancellor of the Exchequer was worth but £2700, which was precisely £4300 less than he was then receiving as Paymaster of the Forces. To be a great magnitude on small pay had its disadvantages, and Mr. Townshend, after remaining home all day in great distress of mind, begged Mr. Pitt to be allowed to retain the office of Paymaster; which was no sooner granted than he changed his mind and begged Mr. Pitt to be allowed to accept the Exchequer place, which Mr. Pitt at first refused and was only persuaded to grant finally upon the intercession of the Duke of Grafton. The day following, Mr. Townshend accordingly informed the King that he had decided, in view of the urgent representations of the Earl

of Chatham, to accept the office of Chancellor of the Exchequer in his Majesty's new ministry.

No one supposed, least of all himself, that this delightful man would have any influence in formulating the policies of the Chatham ministry. Lord Chatham's policies were likely to be his own; and in the present case, so far as America was concerned, they were not such as could be readily associated with Mr. Townshend's views, so far as those views were known or were not inconsistent. For dealing with America, the Earl of Shelburne, because of his sympathetic understanding of colonial matters, had been brought into the ministry to formulate a comprehensive and conciliatory plan; as for the revenue, always the least part of Lord Chatham's difficulties as it was the chief of Mr. Grenville's, it was thought that the possessions of the East India Company, if taken over by the Government, would bring into the Treasury sums quite sufficient to pay the debt as well as to relieve the people, in England and America at least, of those heavy taxes which Mr. Grenville and his party had thought necessarily involved in the extension of empire. It was a curious chapter of accidents that brought all these well-laid plans to nought. Scarcely was the

ministry formed when the Earl of Chatham, incapacitated by the gout, retired into a seclusion that soon became impenetrable; and "even before this resplendent orb was entirely set, and while the western horizon was in a blaze with his descending glory, on the opposite quarter of the heavens arose another luminary, and, for his hour, became lord of the ascendant." This luminary was Mr. Charles Townshend.

Mr. Townshend was the "delight and ornament" of the House, as Edmund Burke said. Never was a man in any country of "more pointed and finished wit, or (where his passions were not concerned) of a more refined, exquisite, and penetrating judgment"; never a man to excel him in "luminous explanation and display of his subject," nor ever one less tedious or better able to conform himself exactly to the temper of the House which he seemed to guide because he was always sure to follow it. In 1765 Mr. Townshend had voted for the Stamp Act, but in 1766, when the Stamp Act began to be no favorite, he voted for the repeal, and would have spoken for it too, if an illness had not prevented him. And now, in 1767, Mr. Townshend was Chancellor of the Exchequer, and as such responsible for the revenue; a

man without any of that temperamental obstinacy which persists in opinions once formed, and without any fixed opinions to persist in; but quite disposed, according to habit, to "hit the House just between wind and water," and to win its applause by speaking for the majority, or by "haranguing inimitably on both sides" when the majority was somewhat uncertain.

In January, 1767, when Lord Chatham was absent and the majority was very uncertain, Mr. Grenville took occasion, in the debate upon the extraordinaries for the army in England and America, to move that America, like Ireland, should support its own establishment. The opportunity was one which Mr. Townshend could not let pass. Much to the astonishment of every one and most of all to that of his colleagues in the ministry, he supported Mr. Grenville's resolution, declaring himself now in favor of the Stamp Act which he had voted to repeal, treating "Lord Chatham's distinction between internal and external taxation as contemptuously as Mr. Grenville had done," and pledging himself able, if necessary, to find a revenue in America nearly adequate to the proposed project. The Earl of Shelburne, in great distress of mind, at once wrote to Lord

Chatham, relating the strange if characteristic conduct of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and declaring himself entirely ignorant of the intentions of his colleagues. It was indeed an anomalous situation. If Lord Chatham's policies were still to be considered those of the ministry, Mr. Townshend might be said to be in opposition, a circumstance which made "many people think Lord Chatham ill at St. James's" only.

Lord Chatham was not ill at St. James's. He was most likely very well at St. James's, being unable to appear there, thus leaving the divided ministry amenable to the King's management or helpless before a factious Opposition. The opportunity of the Opposition came when the Chancellor of the Exchequer, in February, proposed to continue the land tax at four shillings for one year more, after which time, he thought, it might be reduced to three shillings in view of additional revenues to be obtained from the East India Company. But Opposition saw no reason why, in view of the revenue which Mr. Townshend had pledged himself to find in America, a shilling might not be taken from the land at once, a proposal which Mr. Dowdeswell moved should be done, and which was accordingly voted through

the influence of Mr. Grenville and the Duke of Bedford, who had formerly carried the Stamp Act, aided by the Rockingham Whigs who had formerly repealed it. If Lord Chatham was ill at St. James's, this was a proper time to resign. It was doubtless a proper time to resign in any case. But Lord Chatham did not resign. In March he came to London, endeavored to replace Mr. Townshend by Lord North, which he failed to do, and then retired to Bath to be seen no more, leaving Mr. Townshend more than ever "master of the revels."

Mr. Townshend did not resign either, but continued in office, quite undisturbed by the fact that a cardinal measure of the ministry had been decisively voted down. Mr. Townshend reasoned that if Opposition would not support the ministry, all difficulties would be straightened out by the ministry's supporting the Opposition. This was the more reasonable since Opposition had perhaps been right after all, so far as the colonies were concerned. Late reports from that quarter seemed to indicate that the repeal of the Stamp Act, far from satisfying the Americans, had only confirmed that umbrageous people in a spirit of licentiousness, which was precisely what Opposition had

predicted as the sure result of any weak concession. The New York Assembly, it now appeared, refused to make provision for the troops according to the terms of the Quartering Act; New York merchants were petitioning for a further modification of the trade acts; the precious Bostonians, wrangling refined doctrinaire points with Governor Bernard, were making interminable difficulties about compensating the sufferers from the Stamp Act riots. If Lord Chatham, in February, 1767, could go so far as to say that the colonies had "drunk deep of the baneful cup of infatuation," Mr. Townshend, having voted for the Stamp Act and for its repeal, might well think, in May, that the time was ripe for a return to rigorous measures.

On May 13, in a speech which charmed the House, Mr. Townshend opened his plan for settling the colonial question. The growing spirit of insubordination, which must be patent to all, he thought could be most effectively checked by making an example of New York, where defiance was at present most open; for which purpose it was proposed that the meetings of the Assembly of that province be totally suspended until it should have complied with the terms of the Mutiny Act. As one chief source of power in colonial assemblies



which contributed greatly to make them insubordinate was the dependence of executive officials upon them for salaries, Mr. Townshend now renewed the proposal, which he had formerly brought forward in 1763, to create an independent civil list for the payment of governors and judges from England. The revenue for such a civil list would naturally be raised in America. Mr. Townshend would not, however, venture to renew the Stamp Act, which had been so opposed on the ground of its being an internal tax. He was free to say that the distinction between internal and external taxes was perfect nonsense; but, since the logical Americans thought otherwise, he would concede the point and would accordingly humor them by laying only external duties, which he thought might well be on various kinds of glass and paper, on red and white lead, and upon teas, the duties to be collected in colonial ports upon the importation of these commodities from England. It was estimated that the duties might altogether make about £40,000, if the collection were properly attended to; and in order that the collection might be properly attended to, and for the more efficient administration of the American customs in general, Mr. Townshend further recommended

that a Board of Customs Commissioners be created and established in Massachusetts Bay. With slight opposition, all these recommendations were enacted into law; and the Commissioners of the Customs, shortly afterward appointed by the King, arrived in Boston in November, 1767.

At Boston, the Commissioners found much to be done in the way of collecting the customs, particularly in the matter of Madeira wines. Madeira wines were much drunk in the old Bay colony, being commonly imported directly from the islands, without too much attention to the duty of £7 per ton lawfully required in that case. Mr. John Hancock, a popular Boston merchant, did a thriving business in this way; and his sloop *Liberty*, in the ordinary course of trade, carrying six pipes of "good saleable Madeira" for the coffee-house retailers, four pipes of the "very best" for his own table, and "two pipes more of the best . . . for the Treasurer of the province," entered the harbor on May 9, 1768. In the evening Mr. Thomas Kirk, tide-waiter, acting for the Commissioners, boarded the sloop, where he found the captain, Nat Bernard, and also, by some chance, another of Mr. Hancock's skippers, young James Marshall, together with half a dozen of his friends. They sat

with punch served by the captain all round until nine o'clock, when young James Marshall casually asked if a few casks might not as well be set on shore that evening. Mr. Kirk replied that it could not be done with his leave; whereupon he found himself "hoved down" into the cabin and confined there for three hours, from which point of disadvantage he could distinctly hear overhead "a noise of many people at work, a-hoisting out of goods." In due time Mr. Kirk was released, having suffered no injury, except perhaps a little in his official character. Next day Mr. Hancock's cargo was duly entered, no pipes of Madeira listed; and to all appearance the only serious aspect of the affair was that young James Marshall died before morning, it was thought from over-exertion and excitement.

Very likely few people in Boston knew anything about this interesting episode; and a month later much excitement was accordingly raised by the news that Mr. Hancock's sloop *Liberty* had been ordered seized for non-payment of customs. A crowd watched the ship towed, for safe-keeping, under the guns of the *Romney* in the harbor. When the Commissioners, who had come down to see the thing done, left the wharf they were

roughly handled by the incensed people; and in the evening windows of some of their houses were broken, and a boat belonging to a collector was hauled on shore and burnt on the Common. Governor Bernard at last informed the Commissioners that he could not protect them in Boston, whereupon they retired with their families to the *Romney*, and later to Castle William. There they continued, under difficulties, the work of systematizing the American customs; and not without success, inasmuch as the income from the duties during the years from 1768 to 1774 averaged about £30,000 sterling, at an annual cost to the revenue of not more than £13,000. This saving was nevertheless not effected without the establishment at Boston, on the recommendation of the Commissioners, of two regiments of the line which arrived September 28, 1768, and were landed under the guns of eight men-of-war, without opposition. The cost of maintaining the two regiments in Boston was doubtless not included in the £13,000 charged to the revenue as the annual expense of collecting £30,000 of customs.

In spite of the two regiments of the line, with artillery, Boston was not quiet in this year 1768. The soldiers acted decently enough, no doubt; but

their manners were very British and their coats were red, and "their simple presence," conveying every day the suggestion of compulsion, was "an intolerable grievance." Every small matter was magnified. The people, says Hutchinson, "had been used to answer to the call of the town watch in the night, yet they did not like to answer to the frequent calls of the centinels posted at the barracks; . . . and either a refusal to answer, or an answer accompanied with irritating language, endangered the peace of the town." On Sundays, especially, the Boston mind found something irreverent, something at the very least irrelevant, in the presence of the bright colored and highly secular coats; while the noise of fife and drum, so disturbing to the sabbath calm, called forth from the Selectmen a respectful petition to the general requesting him to "dispense with the band."

These were but slight matters; but as time passed little grievances accumulated on both sides until the relation between the people and the soldiers was one of settled hostility, and at last, after two years, the tense situation culminated in the famous Boston Massacre.<sup>7</sup> On the evening of March 5, 1770, there was an alarm of fire, false as it turned out, which brought many people into the streets,

especially boys, whom one may easily imagine catching up, as they ran, handfuls of damp snow to make snowballs. For snowballs, there could be no better target than red-coated sentinels standing erect and motionless at the post of duty; and it chanced that one of these individuals, stationed before the Customs House door, was pelted with the close-packed missiles. Being several times struck, he called for aid, the guard turned out, and a crowd gathered. One of the soldiers was presently knocked down, another was hit by a club, and at last six or seven shots were fired, with or without orders, the result of which was four citizens lying dead on the snow-covered streets of Boston.

The Boston Massacre was not as serious as the Massacre of Saint Bartholomew or the Sicilian Vespers; but it served to raise passion to a white heat in the little provincial town. On the next day there was assembled, under the skillful leadership of Samuel Adams, a great town meeting which demanded in no uncertain terms the removal of the troops from Boston. Under the circumstances, six hundred British soldiers would have fared badly in Boston; and in order to prevent further bloodshed, acting Governor Hutchinson finally gave the

order. Within a fortnight, the two small regiments retired to Castle William. Seven months later Captain Preston and other soldiers implicated in the riot were tried before a Boston jury. Ably defended by John Adams and Josiah Quincy, they were all acquitted on the evidence, except two who were convicted and lightly punished for manslaughter.

As it happened, the Boston Massacre occurred on the 5th of March, 1770, which was the very day that Lord North rose in the House of Commons to propose the partial repeal of the Townshend duties. This outcome was not unconnected with events that had occurred in America during the eighteen months since the landing of the troops in Boston in September, 1768. In 1768, John Adams could not have foretold the Boston Massacre, or have foreseen that he would himself incur popular displeasure for having defended the soldiers. But he could, even at that early date, divine the motives of the British government in sending the troops to Boston. To his mind, "the very appearance of the troops in Boston was a strong proof . . . that the determination of Great Britain to subjugate us was too deep and inveterate to be altered." All the measures of ministry seemed



indeed to confirm that view. Mr. Townshend's condescension in accepting the colonial distinction between internal and external taxes was clearly only a subtle maneuver designed to conceal an attack upon liberty far more dangerous than the former attempts of Mr. Grenville. After all, Mr. Townshend was probably right in thinking the distinction of no importance, the main point being whether, as Lord Chatham had said, the Parliament could by any kind of taxes "take money out of their pockets without their consent."

Duties on glass and tea certainly would take money out of their pockets without their consent, and therefore it must be true that taxes could be rightly laid only by colonial assemblies, in which alone Americans could be represented. But of what value was it to preserve the abstract right of taxation by colonial assemblies if meanwhile the assemblies themselves might, by act of Parliament, be abolished? And had not the New York Assembly been suspended by act of Parliament? And were not the new duties to be used to pay governors and judges, thus by subtle indirection undermining the very basis of legislative independence? And now, in the year 1768, the Massachusetts Assembly, having sent a circular letter to the other colonies

requesting concerted action in defense of their liberties, was directed by Lord Hillsborough, speaking in his Majesty's name, "to rescind the resolution which gave birth to the circular letter from the Speaker, and to declare their disapprobation of, and dissent to, that rash and hasty proceeding." Clearly, it was no mere question of taxation but the larger question of legislative independence that now confronted Americans.

A more skillful dialectic was required to defend American rights against the Townshend duties than against the Stamp Act. It was a somewhat stubborn fact that Parliament had for more than a hundred years passed laws effectively regulating colonial trade, and for regulating trade had imposed duties, some of which had brought in to the Exchequer a certain revenue. Americans, wishing to be thought logical as well as loyal, could not well say at this late date that Parliament had no right to lay duties in regulation of trade. Must they then submit to the Townshend duties? Or was it possible to draw a line, making a distinction, rather more subtle than the old one between internal and external taxes, between duties for regulation and duties for revenue? This latter feat was undertaken by Mr. John

Dickinson of Pennsylvania, anonymously, under the guise of a simple but intelligent and virtuous farmer whose arcadian existence had confirmed in him an instinctive love of liberty and had supplied him with the leisure to meditate at large upon human welfare and the excellent British Constitution.

Mr. Dickinson readily granted America to be dependent upon Great Britain, "as much dependent upon Great Britain as one perfectly free people can be on another." But it appeared axiomatic to the unsophisticated mind of a simple farmer that no people could be free if taxed without its consent, and that Parliament had accordingly no right to lay any taxes upon the colonies; from which it followed that the sole question in respect to duties laid on trade was whether they were intended for revenue or for regulation. Intention in such matters was of primary importance, since all duties were likely to be regulative to some extent. It might be objected that "it will be difficult for any persons but the makers of the laws to determine which of them are made for regulation of trade, and which for raising a revenue." This was true enough but at present of academic importance only, inasmuch as the makers of the Sugar

Act, the Stamp Act, and the Townshend duties had conveniently and very clearly proclaimed their intention to be the raising of a revenue. Yet this question, academic now, might soon become extremely practical. The makers of laws might not always express their intention so explicitly; they might, with intention to raise a revenue, pass acts professing to be for regulation only; and therefore, since "names will not change the nature of things," Americans ought "firmly to believe . . . that unless the most watchful attention be exerted, a new servitude may be slipped upon us under the sanction of usual and respectable terms." In such case the intention should be inferred from the nature of the act; and the Farmer, for his part, sincerely hoped that his countrymen "would never, to their latest existence, want understanding sufficient to discover the intentions of those who rule over them."

Mr. Dickinson's *Farmer's Letters* were widely read and highly commended. The argument, subtle but clear, deriving the nature of an act from the intention of its makers, and the intention of its makers from the nature of the act, contributed more than any other exposition to convince Americans that they "have the same right that all

states have, of judging when their privileges are invaded."

"As much dependent on Great Britain as one perfectly free people can be on another," the Farmer said. Englishmen might be excused for desiring a more precise delimitation of parliamentary jurisdiction than could be found in this phrase, as well as for asking what clear legal ground there was for making any delimitation at all. To the first point, Mr. Dickinson said in effect that Parliament had not the right to tax the colonies and that it had not the right to abolish their assemblies through which they alone could tax themselves. The second point Mr. Dickinson did not clearly answer, although it was undoubtedly most fundamental. To this point Mr. Samuel Adams had given much thought; and in letters which he drafted for the Massachusetts Assembly, in the famous circular letter particularly, and in the letter of January 12, 1769, sent to the Assembly's agent in England, Mr. Dennys De Berdt, Mr. Adams formulated a theory designed to show that the colonies were "subordinate" but not subject to the British Parliament. The delimitation of colonial and parliamentary jurisdictions Mr. Adams achieved by subordinating all legis-

lative authority to an authority higher than any positive law, an authority deriving its sanction from the fixed and universal law of nature. This higher authority, which no legislature could "overleap without destroying its own foundation," was the British Constitution.

Mr. Adams spoke of the British Constitution with immense confidence, as something singularly definite and well known, the provisions of which were clearly ascertainable; which singular effect doubtless came from the fact that he thought of it, not indeed as something written down on paper and deposited in archives of state, but as a series of propositions which, as they were saying in France, were indelibly "written in the hearts of all men." The British Constitution, he said, like the constitution of every free state, "is fixed," having its foundation not in positive law, which would indeed give Parliament an ultimate and therefore a despotic authority, but in "the law of God and nature." There were in the British Empire many legislatures, all deriving their authority from, and all finding their limitations in, the Constitution. Parliament had certainly a supreme or superintending legislative authority in the Empire, as the colonial assemblies had a

“subordinate,” in the sense of a local, legislative authority; but neither the Parliament nor any colonial assembly could “overleap the Constitution without destroying its own foundation.” And therefore, since the Constitution is founded “in the law of God and nature,” and since “it is an essential natural right that a man shall quietly enjoy and have the sole disposal of his property,” the Americans must enjoy this right equally with Englishmen, and Parliament must be bound to respect this right in the colonies as well as in England; from which it followed irresistibly that the consent of the colonies to any taxation must be sought exclusively in their own assemblies, it being manifestly impossible for that consent to be “constitutionally had in Parliament.”

It was commonly thought in America that Mr. Adams, although not a judge, had a singular gift for constitutional interpretation. Far-sighted men could nevertheless believe that a powerful party in England, inspired by inveterate hatred of America and irretrievably bent upon her ruin, would pronounce all his careful distinctions ridiculous and would still reply to every argument by the mere assertion, as a fact behind which one could not go, that Parliament had always had and



must therefore still have full power to bind the colonies in all cases whatsoever. If Britain would not budge from this position, Americans would soon be confronted with the alternative of admitting Parliament to have full power or denying it to have any.

With that sharp-set alternative in prospect, it would be well to keep in mind the fact that arguments lost carrying power in proportion to their subtlety; and in the opinion of so good a judge as Benjamin Franklin the reasoning of Mr. Adams and Mr. Dickinson was perhaps not free from this grave disadvantage.

I am not yet master [he was free to confess] of the idea these . . . writers have of the relation between Britain and her colonies. I know not what the Boston people mean by the "subordination" they acknowledge in their Assembly to Parliament, while they deny its power to make laws for them, nor what bounds the Farmer sets to the power he acknowledges in Parliament to "regulate the trade of the colonies," it being difficult to draw lines between duties for regulation and those for revenue; and, if the Parliament is to be the judge, it seems to me that establishing such a principle of distinction will amount to little. The more I have thought and read on the subject, the more I find myself confirmed in opinion, that no middle ground can be well maintained, I mean not clearly with

intelligible arguments. Something might be made of either of the extremes: that Parliament has a power to make *all laws* for us, or that it has a power to make *no laws* for us; and I think the arguments for the latter more numerous and weighty, than those for the former.

The good Doctor had apparently read and thought a great deal about the matter since the day when Mr. Grenville had called him in to learn if there were good objections to be urged against the Stamp Act.

Practical men were meanwhile willing to allow the argument to take whatever direction the exigencies of the situation might require, being ready to believe that Mr. Dickinson counseled well and that Mr. Franklin counseled well; being nevertheless firmly convinced from past experience that an Englishman's ability to see reason was never great except when his pocket was touched. Practical men were therefore generally of the opinion that they could best demonstrate their rights by exhibiting their power. This happily, they could do by bringing pressure to bear upon English merchants by taking money out of *their* pockets — without their consent to be sure but in a manner strictly legal — by means of non-

importation agreements voluntarily entered into.

As early as October, 1767, the Boston merchants entered into such an agreement, which was however not very drastic and proved to be of no effect, as it was at first unsupported by the merchants in any other colony. In April, 1768, the merchants of New York, seeing the necessity of concerted action, agreed not to import "any goods [save a very few enumerated articles] which shall be shipped from Great Britain after the first of October next; provided Boston and Philadelphia adopt similar measures by the first of June." Philadelphia merchants said they were not opposed to the principle of non-importation, but greatly feared the New York plan would serve to create a monopoly by enabling men of means to lay in a large stock of goods before the agreement went into effect. This was very true; but the objection, if it was an objection, proved not to be an insurmountable one. Before the year was out, in the late summer for the most part, the merchants in all the commercial towns had subscribed to agreements, differing somewhat in detail, of which the substance was that they would neither import from Great Britain any commodities, nor buy or sell any which might inadvertently find their way

in, until the duties imposed by the Townshend act should have been repealed.

The merchants' agreements were, for whatever reason, much better observed in some places than in others. Imports from Great Britain to New York fell during the year 1769 from about £482,000 to about £74,000. Imports into New England and into Pennsylvania declined a little more than one half; whereas in the southern colonies there was no decline at all, but on the contrary an increase, slight in the case of Maryland and Virginia and rather marked in the Carolinas. In spite of these defections, the experiment was not without effect upon English merchants. English merchants, but little interested in the decline or increase of trade to particular colonies, were chiefly aware that the total exportation to America was nearly a million pounds less in 1769 than in 1768. Understanding little about colonial rights, but knowing only, as in 1766, that their "trade was hurt," they accordingly applied once more to Parliament for relief. The commerce with America which was "so essential to afford employment and subsistence to the manufactures of these kingdoms, to augment the public revenue, to serve as a nursery for seamen, and to increase our navigation and maritime strength" —

this commerce, said the Merchants and Traders of the City of London Trading to America, "is at present in an alarming state of suspension"; and the Merchants and Traders of the City of London therefore humbly prayed Parliament to repeal the duties which were the occasion of their inconveniences.

The petition of the London merchants came before the House on March 5, 1770, that being the day fixed by Lord North for proposing, on behalf of the ministry, certain measures for America. No one, said the first minister, could be more free than himself to recognize the importance of American trade or more disposed to meet the wishes of the London merchants as far as possible. The inconveniences under which that trade now labored were manifest, but he could not think, with the petitioners, that these inconveniences arose from "the nature of the duties" so much as "through the medium of the dissatisfaction of the Americans, and those combinations and associations of which we have heard" — associations and combinations which had been called, in an address to the House, "unwarrantable," but which he for his part would go so far as to call illegal. These illegal combinations in America

were obviously what caused the inconveniences of which the merchants complained. To the pressure of illegal combinations alone Parliament ought never to yield; and ministers wished it clearly understood that, if they were about to propose a repeal of some of the duties, they were not led to take this step from any consideration of the disturbances in the colonies.

On the contrary, the duties which it was now proposed to repeal — the duties on lead, glass, and paper — were to be repealed strictly on the ground that they ought never to have been laid, because duties on British manufactures were contrary to true commercial principles. Last year, when ministers had expressed, in a letter of Lord Hillsborough to the governors, their intention to repeal these duties, some members had been in favor of repealing all the duties and some were still in favor of doing so. As to that, the first minister could only say that he had not formerly been opposed to it and would not now be opposed to it, had the Americans, in response to the Earl of Hillsborough's letter, exhibited any disposition to cease their illegal disturbances or renounce their combinations. But the fact was that conditions in America had grown steadily worse since the Earl of Hillsborough's letter, and

never had been so bad as now; in view of which fact ministers could not but think it wise to maintain some tax as a matter of principle purely. They would therefore recommend that the tax on tea, no burden certainly on anyone, be continued as a concrete application of the right of Parliament to tax the colonies.

In so far as they were designed to bring pressure to bear upon the mother country, the merchants' agreements were clearly not without a measure of success, having helped perhaps to bring Parliament to the point of repealing the duties on lead, glass, and paper, as well as to bring ministers to the point of keeping the duty on tea. Americans generally were doubtless well pleased with this effect; but not all Americans were able to regard the experiment in non-importation with unqualified approval in other respects. Non-importation, by diminishing the quantity and increasing the price of commodities, involved a certain amount of personal sacrifice. This sacrifice, however, fell chiefly on the consumers, the non-importation not being under certain circumstances altogether without advantage to merchants who faithfully observed their pledges as well as to those who observed them only occasionally. So long as their



warehouses, well stocked in advance, contained anything that could be sold at a higher price than formerly, non-importation was no bad thing even for those merchants who observed the agreement. For those who did not observe the agreement, as well as for those who engaged in the smuggling trade from Holland, it was no bad thing at any time, and it promised to become an increasingly excellent thing in exact proportion to the exhaustion of the fair trader's stock and the consequent advance in prices. As time passed, therefore, the fair trader became aware that the non-importation experiment, practically considered, was open to certain objections; whereas the unfair trader was more in favor of the experiment the longer it endured, being every day more convinced that the non-importation agreement ought to be continued and strictly adhered to as essential to the maintenance of American liberties.

The practical defects of non-importation were likely to be understood, by those who could ever understand them, in proportion to the decay of business; and in the spring of 1770 they were nowhere better understood than in New York, where the decay of business was most marked. This decrease was greatest in New York, so the mer-

chants maintained, because that city had been most faithful in observing the agreement, importation having there fallen from £482,000 to £74,000 during the year. It is possible, however, that the decay of business in New York was due in part and perhaps primarily to the retirement, in November, 1768, of the last issues of the old Bills of Credit, according to the terms of the Paper Currency Act passed by Parliament during Mr. Grenville's administration. As a result of this retirement of all the paper money in the province, money of any sort was exceedingly scarce during the years 1769 and 1770. Lyon dollars were rarely seen; and the quantity of Spanish silver brought into the colony through the trade with the foreign islands, formerly considerable but now greatly diminished by the stricter enforcement of the Townshend Trade Acts, was hardly sufficient for local exchange alone, to say nothing of settling heavy balances in London, although, fortunately perhaps, there were in the year 1769 no heavy London balances to be settled on account of the faithful observance of the non-importation agreement by the merchants. The lack of money was therefore doubtless a chief cause of the great decay of business in New York; and some there

were who maintained that the faithful observance of the non-importation agreement by the merchants was due to the decay of trade rather than the decay of trade being due to the faithful observance of the non-importation agreement.

Whatever the true explanation of this academic point might be, it was an undoubted fact that business was more nearly at a standstill in New York than elsewhere. Accordingly, in the spring of 1770, when money was rarely to be seen and debtors were selling their property at one-half or one-third of its former value in order to discharge obligations long overdue, the fair trading merchants of New York were not disposed to continue an experiment of which, as they said, they had borne the chief burden to the advantage of others and to their own impending ruin. Zealous Sons of Liberty, such as Alexander MacDougall and John Lamb, popular leaders of the "Inhabitants" of the city, were on the other hand determined that the non-importation agreement should be maintained unimpaired. The hard times, they said, were due chiefly to the monopoly prices exacted by the wealthy merchants, who were not ruined at all, who had on the contrary made a good thing out of the non-importation as long as they had anything

to sell, and whose patriotism (God save the mark!) had now suddenly grown lukewarm only because they had disposed of all their goods, including "old moth-eaten clothes that had been rotting in the shops for years."

These aspersions the merchants knew how to ignore. Their determination not to continue the non-importation was nevertheless sufficiently indicated in connection with the annual celebration, in March, of the repeal of the Stamp Act. On this occasion the merchants refused to meet as formerly with the Sons of Liberty, but made provision for a dinner of their own at another place, where all the Friends of Liberty and Trade were invited to be present. Both dinners were well attended, and at both the repeal of the Stamp Act was celebrated with patriotic enthusiasm, the main difference being that whereas the Sons of Liberty drank a toast to Mr. MacDougall and to "a continuance of the non-importation agreement until the revenue acts are repealed," the Friends of Liberty and Trade ignored Mr. MacDougall and drank to "trade and navigation and a speedy removal of their embarrassments."

In the determination not to continue the old agreement, the Friends of Liberty and Trade

were meanwhile strongly confirmed when it was learned that Britain was willing on her part to make concessions. By the middle of May it was known that the Townshend duties (except the duty on tea) had been repealed; and in June it was learned that Parliament had at last, after many representations from the Assembly, passed a special act permitting New York to issue £120,000 in Bills of Credit receivable at the Treasury. It was thought that concession on the part of Great Britain ought in justice to meet with concession on the part of America. Accordingly, on the ground that other towns, and Boston in particular, were more active "in resolving what they ought to do than in doing what they had resolved," and on the ground that the present non-importation agreement no longer served "any other purpose than tying the hands of honest men, to let rogues, smugglers, and men of no character plunder their country," the New York merchants, on July 9, 1770, resolved that for the future they would import from Great Britain all kinds of commodities except such as might be subject to duties imposed by Parliament.

The New York merchants were on every hand loudly denounced for having betrayed the cause

of liberty; but before the year was out the old agreement was everywhere set aside. Yet everywhere, as at New York, the merchants bound themselves not to import any British teas. The duty on British teas was slight. Americans might have paid the duty without increasing the price of their much prized luxury; ministers might have collected the same duty in England to the advantage of the Exchequer. That Britain should have insisted on this peppercorn in acknowledgement of her right, that America should have refused it in vindication of her liberty, may be taken as a high tribute from two eminently practical peoples to the power of abstract ideas.

## CHAPTER V

### A LITTLE DISCREET CONDUCT

It has been his [Thomas Hutchinson's] principle from a boy that mankind are to be governed by the discerning few, and it has been ever since his ambition to be the hero of the few. — *Samuel Adams*.

We have not been so quiet these five years. . . . If it were not for two or three Adamses, we should do well enough. — *Thomas Hutchinson*.

IN December, 1771, Horace Walpole, a persistent if not an infallible political prophet, was of opinion that all the storms that for a decade had distressed the Empire were at last happily blown over; among which storms he included, as relatively of minor importance, the disputes with the colonies. During two years following, this prediction might well have appeared to moderate minded men entirely justified. American affairs were barely mentioned in Parliament, and a few paragraphs in the *Annual Register* were thought sufficient to chronicle for English readers events



of interest occurring across the Atlantic. In the colonies themselves an unwonted tranquillity prevailed. Rioting, as an established social custom, disappeared in most of the places where it had formerly been so much practised. The Sons of Liberty, retaining the semblance of an organization, were rarely in the public eye save at the annual celebrations of the repeal of the Stamp Act, quite harmless occasions devoted to the expression of patriotic sentiments. Merchants and landowners, again prosperous, were content to fall back into accustomed habits of life, conscious of duty done without too much stress, readily believing their liberties finally vindicated against encroachments from abroad and their privileges secure against unwarranted and dangerous pretensions at home. "The people appear to be weary of their altercations with the mother country," Mr. Johnson, the Connecticut agent, wrote to Wedderburn, in October, 1771; "a little discreet conduct on both sides would perfectly reëstablish that warm affection and respect towards Great Britain for which this country was once remarkable."

Discreet conduct was nowhere more necessary than in Massachusetts, where the people, perhaps

because they were much accustomed to them, grew weary of altercations less easily than in most colonies. Yet even in Massachusetts there was a marked waning of enthusiasm after the high excitement occasioned by the Boston Massacre, a certain disintegration of the patriot party. James Otis recovered from a temporary fit of insanity only to grow strangely suspicious of Samuel Adams. Mr. Hancock, discreetly holding his peace, attended to his many thriving and very profitable business ventures. John Adams, somewhat unpopular for having defended and procured the acquittal of the soldiers implicated in the Massacre, retired in high dudgeon from public affairs to the practice of his profession; in high dudgeon with everyone concerned — with himself first of all, and with the people who so easily forgot their interests and those who had served them, and with the British Government and all fawning tools of ministers, of whom Mr. Thomas Hutchinson was chief. Meanwhile, Mr. Hutchinson, so roughly handled in the secret diary of the rising young lawyer, was the recipient of new honors, having been made Governor of the province to succeed Francis Bernard. For once finding himself almost popular, he thought he

perceived a disposition in all the colonies, and even in Massachusetts, to let the controversy subside. "Though there are a small majority sour enough, yet when they seek matter for protests, remonstrances, they are puzzled where to charge the grievances which they look for." The new Governor looked forward to happier days and an easy administration. "Hancock and most of the party are quiet," he said, "and all of them, except Adams, abate of their virulence. Adams would push the Continent into a rebellion to-morrow, if it was in his power."

No one, in the year 1770, was better fitted than Samuel Adams, either by talent and temperament or the circumstances of his position, to push the continent into a rebellion. Unlike most of his patriot friends, he had neither private business nor private profession to fall back upon when public affairs grew tame, his only business being, as one might say, the public business, his only profession the definition and defense of popular rights. In this profession, by dint of single-minded devotion to it through a course of years, he had indeed become wonderfully expert and had already achieved for himself the enviable position of known and named leader in every movement of opposi-

tion to royal or magisterial prerogative. In this connection no exploit had brought him so much distinction as his skillful management of the popular uprising which had recently forced Governor Hutchinson to withdraw the troops from Boston. The event was no by-play in the life of Samuel Adams, no amateur achievement accomplished on the side, but the serious business of a man who during ten years had abandoned all private pursuits and had embraced poverty to become a tribune of the people.

Samuel Adams had not inherited poverty nor had he, after all, exactly embraced it, but had as it were naturally drifted into it through indifference to worldly gain, the indifference which men of single and fixed purpose have for all irrelevant matters. The elder Samuel Adams was a merchant of substance and of such consequence in the town of Boston that in Harvard College, where students were named according to the prominence of their families, his son's name was fifth in a class of twenty-two. In 1748, upon the death of his father, Samuel Junior accordingly inherited a very decent property, considered so at least in that day — a spacious old house in Purchase Street together with a well-established malt business.

For business, however, the young man, and not so young either, was without any aptitude whatever, being entirely devoid of the acquisitive instinct and neither possessing nor ever being able to acquire any skill in the fine art of inducing people to give for things more than it cost to make them. These deficiencies the younger Adams had already exhibited before the death of his father, from whom he received on one occasion a thousand pounds, half of which he promptly loaned to an impecunious friend, and which he would in any case doubtless have lost, as he soon did the other half, on his own account. In such incompetent hands the malt business soon fell to be a liability rather than an asset. Other liabilities accumulated, notably one incurred by the tax collectors of the town of Boston, of whom Samuel Adams was one during the years from 1756 to 1764. For one reason or another, on Adams's part certainly on account of his humane feelings and general business inefficiency, the collectors fell every year a little behind in the collections, and one day found themselves declared on the official records to be indebted to the town in the sum of £9,878. This indebtedness Mr. Hutchinson and other gentlemen not well disposed towards Samuel Adams

conveniently and frequently referred to in later years as a "defalcation."

In this year of 1764, when he had lost his entire patrimony except the old house in Purchase Street, now somewhat rusty for want of repair, Samuel Adams was married to Elizabeth Wells. It was his second marriage, the first having taken place in 1749, of which the fruit was a son and a daughter. Samuel Adams was then—it was the year of the Sugar Act—forty-two years old; that is to say, at the age when a man's hair begins to turn gray, when his character is fixed, when his powers, such as they are, are fully matured; well known as a "poor provider," an improvident man who had lost a fair estate, had failed in business, and was barely able, and sometimes not able, to support his small family. These mundane matters concerned Samuel Adams but little. To John Adams he said on one occasion that "he never looked forward in life; never planned, laid a scheme, or formed a design for laying up anything for himself or others after him." This was the truth, inexplicable as it must have seemed to his more provident cousin. It was even less than the truth: during the years following 1764, Samuel Adams renounced all pretense of private business,

giving himself wholly to public affairs, while his good wife, with excellent management, made his stipend as clerk of the Assembly serve for food, and obtained, through the generosity of friends or her own ingenious labors, indispensable clothes for the family. Frugality, that much lauded virtue in the eighteenth century, needed not to be preached in the old Purchase Street home; but life went on there, somehow or other, decently enough, not without geniality yet with evident piety. The old Bible is still preserved from which each evening some member of the family read a chapter, and at every meal the head of the house said grace, returning thanks for God's benefits.

If Samuel Adams at the age of forty-two was known for a man who could not successfully manage his own affairs, he was also known, and very well known, for a man with a singular talent for managing the affairs of the community; he could manage successfully, for example, town meetings and every sort of business, great or small, incidental to local politics. This talent he may have inherited from his father, who was himself a notable of the neighborhood—one of the organizers of the "New South" church, and prominent about 1724 in a club popularly known



as the "Caulkers' Club," formed for the purpose of laying "plans for introducing certain persons into places of trust and power," and was himself from time to time introduced into such places of trust and power as justice of the peace, deacon, selectman, and member of the provincial assembly. From an early age, the younger Samuel exhibited a marked aptitude for this sort of activity, and was less likely to be found "in his counting-house a-counting of his money" than in some hospitable tavern or back shop discussing town topics with local worthies. Samuel Adams was born to serve on committees. He had the innate slant of mind that properly belongs to a moderator of mass meetings called to aggravate a crisis. With the soul of a Jacobin, he was most at home in clubs, secret clubs of which everyone had heard and few were members, designed at best to accomplish some particular good for the people, at all events meeting regularly to sniff the approach of tyranny in the abstract, academically safeguarding the commonwealth by discussing the first principles of government.

From the days of Anne Hutchinson, Boston never lacked clubs; and the Caulkers' Club was the prototype of many, rather more secular and

political than religious or transcendental, which flourished in the years preceding the Revolution. John Adams, in that Diary which tells us so much that we wish to know, gives us a peep inside one of these clubs, the "Caucus Club," which met regularly at one period in the garret of Tom Dawes's house. "There they smoke tobacco till you cannot see from one end of the garret to the other. There they drink flip, I suppose, and there they choose a moderator who puts questions to the vote regularly; and selectmen, assessors, collectors, wardens, fire-wards, and representatives are regularly chosen before they are chosen in the town. Uncle Fairfield, Story, Ruddock, Adams, Cooper, and a *rudis indigestaque moles* of others are members. They send committees to wait on the merchants' club, and to propose and join in the choice of men and measures." The artist Copley, in the familiar portrait by which posterity knows Samuel Adams, chose to represent him in conventional garb, on a public and dramatic occasion, standing erect, eyes flashing and mouth firm-set, pointing with admonitory finger to the Charter of Massachusetts Bay — a portrait well suited to hang in the Art Museum or in the meeting place of the Daughters of the Revolution. A

different effect would have been produced if the man had been placed in Tom Dawes's garret, dimly seen through tobacco smoke, sitting, with coat off, drinking flip, in the midst of Uncle Fairfield, Story, Cooper, and a *rudis indigestaque moles*. This was his native habitat, an environment precisely suited to his peculiar talent.

Samuel Adams had a peculiar talent, that indispensable combination of qualities possessed by all great revolutionists of the crusading type, such as Jean Jacques Rousseau, John Brown, or Mazzini. When a man abandons his business or job and complacently leaves the clothing of his children to wife or neighbors in order to drink flip and talk politics, ordinary folk are content to call him a lazy lout, ne'er-do-well, worthless fellow, or scamp. Samuel Adams was not a scamp. He might have been no more than a ne'er-do-well, perhaps, if cosmic forces had not opportunely provided him with an occupation which his contemporaries and posterity could regard as a high service to humanity. In his own eyes, this was the view of the situation which justified his conduct. When he was about to depart for the first Continental Congress, a number of friends contributed funds to furnish him forthwith pre-

sentable apparel: a suit of clothes, new wig, new hat, "six pair of the best silk hose, six pair of fine thread ditto, . . . six pair of shoes"; and, it being "modestly inquired of him whether his finances were not rather low than otherwise, he replied it was true that was the case, but *he was very indifferent about these matters, so that his poor abilities were of any service to the public*; upon which the gentleman obliged him to accept a purse containing about fifteen or twenty Johannes." To accept so much and still preserve one's self-respect would be impossible to ordinary men under ordinary circumstances. Fate had so ordered the affairs of Samuel Adams that integrity of character required him to be an extraordinary man acting under extraordinary circumstances.

The character of his mind, as well as the outward circumstances of his life, predisposed Samuel Adams to think that a great crisis in the history of America and of the world confronted the men of Boston. There was in him some innate scholastic quality, some strain of doctrinaire Puritan inheritance diverted to secular interests, that gave direction to all his thinking. In 1743, upon receiving the degree of Master of Arts from Harvard College, he argued the thesis, "Whether it be lawful

to resist the Supreme Magistrate, if the Commonwealth cannot otherwise be preserved." We may suppose that the young man acquitted himself well, reasoning with great nicety in favor of the legality of an illegal action, doubtless to the edification of Governor Shirley, who was present and who perhaps felt sufficiently remote from the performance, being himself only an actual supreme magistrate presiding over a real commonwealth. And indeed for most young men a college thesis is but an exercise for sharpening the wits, rarely dangerous in its later effects. But in the case of Samuel Adams, the ability to distinguish the speculative from the actual reality seemed to diminish as the years passed. After 1764, relieved of the pressure of life's anxieties and daily nourishing his mind on premises and conclusions reasonably abstracted from the relative and the conditioned circumstance, he acquired in a high degree the faculty of identifying reality with propositions about it; so that, for example, Liberty seemed threatened if improperly defined, and a false inference from an axiom of politics appeared the same as evil intent to take away a people's rights. Thus it was that from an early date, in respect to the controversy between the colonies and the mother

country, Samuel Adams became possessed of settled convictions that were capable of clear and concise presentation and that were at once impersonal and highly subjective, for which outward events — the Stamp Act, the Townshend duties, the appointment of Thomas Hutchinson as Governor, or whatever — furnished as it were the suggestion only, the convictions themselves being largely the result of inward brooding, the finespun product of his own ratiocinative mind.

The crisis which thus threatened — in the mind of Samuel Adams — was not an ordinary one: no mere complication of affairs, or creaking of worn-out institutions, or honest difference of opinion about the expediency or the legality of measures. It was a crisis engendered deliberately by men of evil purpose, public enemies well known and often named. Samuel Adams, who had perhaps not heard of even one of the many materialistic interpretations of history, thought of the past as chiefly instructive in connection with certain great epochal conflicts between Liberty and Tyranny — a political Manicheism, in which the principle of Liberty was embodied in the virtuous many and the principle of Tyranny in the wicked few. Those who read history must know it for a noto-



rious fact that ancient peoples had lost their liberties at the hands of designing men, leagued and self-conscious conspirators against the welfare of the human race. Thus the yoke was fastened upon the Romans, "millions . . . enslaved by a few." Now, in the year 1771, another of these epochal conflicts was come upon the world, and Samuel Adams, living in heroic days, was bound to stand in the forefront of the virtuous against "restless Adversaries . . . forming the most dangerous Plans for the Ruin of the Reputation of the People, in order to build their own Greatness upon the Destruction of their liberties."

A superficial observer might easily fall into the error of supposing that the restless adversaries and designing conspirators against whom patriots had to contend were all in England; on the contrary, the most persistent enemies of Liberty were Americans residing in the midst of the people whom they sought to despoil. One might believe that in England "the general inclination is to wish that we may preserve our liberties; and perhaps even the ministry could for some reasons find it in their hearts to be willing that we should be restored to the state we were in before the passing of the Stamp Act." Even Lord Hillsborough, richly



meriting the "curses of the disinterested and better part of the colonists," was by no means "to be reckoned the most inveterate and active of all the Conspirators against our rights. There are others on this side of the Atlantick who have been more insidious in plotting the Ruin of our Liberties than even he, and they are the more infamous, because the country they would enslave, is that very Country in which (to use the words of their Adulators and Expectants) they were 'born and educated.'" Of all these restless adversaries and infamous plotters of ruin, the chief, in the mind of Samuel Adams, was probably Mr. Thomas Hutchinson.

Judged only by what he did and said and by such other sources of information as are open to the historian, Thomas Hutchinson does not appear to have been, prior to 1771, an Enemy of the Human Race. One of his ancestors, Mistress Anne Hutchinson, poor woman, had indeed been—it was as far back as 1637—an enemy of the Boston Church; but as a family the Hutchinsons appear to have kept themselves singularly free from notoriety or other grave reproach. Thomas Hutchinson himself was born in 1711 in Garden Court Street, Boston, of rich but honest parents,

a difficult character which he managed for many years to maintain with reasonable credit. In 1771, he was a grave, elderly man of sixty years, more distinguished than any of his forebears had been, having since the age of twenty-six been honored with every important elective and appointive office in the province, including that of governor, which he had with seeming reluctance just accepted. It may be that Thomas Hutchinson was ambitious; but if he elbowed his way into office by solicitation or by the mean arts of an intriguer the fact was well concealed. He was not a member of the "Caulkers' Club." So far as is known, he was not a member of any club designed "to introduce certain persons into places of trust and power"; except indeed of the club, if one may call it such, composed of the "best families," closely interrelated by marriage and social intercourse, mostly wealthy, enjoying the leisure and the disposition to occupy themselves with affairs, and commonly regarding themselves as forming a kind of natural aristocracy whose vested duty it was to manage the commonwealth. To this club Mr. Hutchinson belonged; and it was no doubt partly through its influence, without any need of solici-

tation on his part, that offices were thrust upon him.

One morning in September, 1760—it was the day following the death of Chief Justice Sewall—Mr. Hutchinson was stopped in the street by the first lawyer in the province, Jeremiah Gridley, who assured him that he, Mr. Hutchinson, must be Mr. Sewall's successor; and it soon appeared that other principal lawyers, together with the surviving judge of the Superior Court, were of the same opinion as Mr. Gridley. Although the place was an attractive one, Mr. Hutchinson distrusted his ability to discharge competently the duties of a Chief Justice, since he had never had any systematic training as a lawyer. Besides, as he was aware, James Otis, Sr., who desired the place and made no secret of the fact that he had formerly been promised it by Governor Shirley, at once became active in pressing his claims upon the attention of Governor Bernard. In this solicitation he was joined by his son, James Otis, Jr. Mr. Hutchinson, on the contrary, refrained from all solicitation, so he tells us at least, and even warned Governor Bernard that it would perhaps be wiser to avoid any trouble which the Otises might be disposed to make in case they were disappointed.

This line of conduct may have been only a shrewder form of solicitation, the proof of which, to some minds, would be that Mr. Hutchinson was in fact appointed to be Chief Justice. This appointment was afterwards recalled as one of Mr. Hutchinson's many offenses, although at the time it seems to have given general satisfaction, especially to the lawyers.

The lawyers may well have been pleased, for the new Chief Justice was a man whose outstanding abilities, even more than his place in society, marked him for responsible position. Thomas Hutchinson possessed the efficient mind. No one surpassed him in wide and exact knowledge, always at command, of the history of the province, of its laws and customs, of past and present practice in respect to the procedure of administration. Industrious and systematic in his habits of work, conscientious in the performance of his duties down to the last jot and tittle of the law, he was preëminently fitted for the neat and expeditious dispatch of official business; and his sane and trenchant mind, habituated by long practice to the easy mastery of details, was prompt to pass upon any practical matter, however complicated, an intelligent and just judgment. It was doubtless

thought, in an age when the law was not too highly specialized to be understood by any but the indoctrinated, that these traits would make him a good judge, as they had made him a good counselor. Not all people, it is true, are attracted by the efficient mind; and Mr. Hutchinson in the course of years had made enemies, among whom were many who still thought of him as the man chiefly responsible for the abolition, some eleven years before, of what was probably the most vicious system of currency known to colonial America. Nevertheless, in the days before the passing of the Stamp Act, Mr. Hutchinson was commonly well thought of, both for character and ability, and might still without offense be mentioned as a useful and honored public servant.

Mr. Hutchinson did not, at any time in his life, regard himself as an Enemy of the Human Race, or of America, or even of liberty rightly considered. Perhaps he had not the fine enthusiasm for the Human Race that Herder or Jean Jacques Rousseau had; but at least he wished it well; and to America, the country in which he was born and educated and in which he had always lived, he was profoundly attached. Of America he was as proud as a cultivated and unbigoted

man well could be, extremely jealous of her good name abroad and prompt to stand, in any way that was appropriate and customary, in defense of her rights and liberties. To rights and liberties in general, and to those of America in particular, he had given long and careful thought. It was perhaps characteristic of his practical mind to distinguish the word liberty from the various things which it might conceivably represent, and to think that of these various things some were worth more than others, what any of them was worth being a relative matter depending largely upon circumstances. Speaking generally, liberty in the abstract, apart from particular and known conditions, was only a phrase, a brassy tinkle in Mr. Hutchinson's ear, meaning nothing unless it meant mere absence of all constraint. The liberty which Mr. Hutchinson prized was not the same as freedom from constraint. Not liberty in this sense, or in any sense, but the welfare of a people neatly ordered for them by good government, was what he took to be the chief end of politics; and from this conception it followed that "in a remove from a state of nature to the most perfect state of government there must be a great restraint of natural liberty."

The limitations proper to be placed upon natural liberty could scarcely be determined by abstract speculation or with mathematical precision, but would obviously vary according to the character and circumstances of a people, always keeping in mind the "peace and good order" of the particular community as the prime object. In all such matters reasonable men would seek enlightenment not in the Utopias of philosophers but in the history of nations; and, taking a large view of history, the history more particularly of the British Empire and of Massachusetts Bay, it seemed to Mr. Hutchinson, as it seemed to John Locke and to Baron Montesquieu, that a proper balance between liberty and authority had been very nearly attained in the British Constitution, as nearly perhaps as common human frailty would permit. The prevailing "thirst for liberty," which seemed to be "the ruling passion of the age," Mr. Hutchinson was therefore able to contemplate with much sanity and detachment. "In governments under arbitrary rule" such a passion for liberty might, he admitted, "have a salutary effect; but in governments in which as much freedom is enjoyed as can consist with the ends of government, as was the case in this



Province, it must work anarchy and confusion unless there be some external power to restrain it."

In 1771, Thomas Hutchinson was perfectly convinced that this passion for liberty, during several years rising steadily in the heads of the most unstable part of the population, the most unstable "both for character and estates," had brought Massachusetts Bay to a state not far removed from anarchy. Not that he was unaware of the mistakes of ministers. The measures of Mr. Grenville he had regarded as unwise from every point of view. In behalf of the traditional privileges of the colonies — privileges which their conduct had well justified — and in behalf of the welfare of the Empire, he had protested against these measures, as also later against the measures of Mr. Townshend; and of all these measures he still held the same opinion, that they were unwise measures. Nevertheless, Parliament had undoubtedly a legal right — other rights in the political sense, Mr. Hutchinson knew nothing of — to pass them; and the passing of legal measures, however unwise, was not to his mind clear evidence of a conspiracy to establish absolute despotism on the ruins of English liberty. [Mr. Hutchinson was doubtless temperamentally less

inclined to fear tyranny than anarchy. Of the two evils, he doubtless preferred such oppression as might result from parliamentary taxation to any sort of liberty the attainment of which might seem to require the looting of his ancestral mansion by a Boston mob. In 1771, at the time of his accession to the governorship, Mr. Hutchinson was therefore of opinion that "there must be an abridgment of *what is called* English liberty."

The liberty Thomas Hutchinson enjoyed least and desired most to have abridged was the liberty of being governed, in that province where he had formerly been happy in the competent discharge of official duties, by a self-constituted and illegal popular government intrenched in the town of Boston. In a letter which he wrote in 1765 but did not send, he said:

It will be some amusement to you to have a more circumstantial account of the model of government among us. I will begin with the lowest branch, partly legislative, partly executive. This consists of the rabble of the town of Boston, headed by one Mackintosh, who, I imagine, you never heard of. He is a bold fellow, and as likely for a Masaniello as you can well conceive. When there is occasion to burn or hang effigies or pull down houses, these are employed; but since government has been brought to a system, they are somewhat

controlled by a superior set consisting of the master-masons, and carpenters, &c., of the town of Boston. When anything of more importance is to be determined, as opening the custom-house on any matter of trade, these are under the direction of a committee of the merchants, Mr. Rowe at their head, then Molyneaux, Soloman Davis, &c.: but all affairs of a general nature, opening of the courts of law, &c., this is proper for a general meeting of the inhabitants of Boston, where Otis, with his mob-high eloquence, prevails in every motion, and the town first determine what is necessary to be done, and then apply either to the Governor or Council, or resolve that it is necessary for the General Court to correct it; and it would be a very extraordinary resolve indeed that is not carried into execution.

This was in 1765. In 1770, the matter had ceased to be amusing, for every year the model government was brought to a greater perfection, so that at last the Town Meeting, prescriptively composed of certain qualified voters and confined to the determination of strictly local matters, had not only usurped all the functions of government in the province, which was bad enough, but was completely under the thumb of every Tom, Dick, and Harry who might wish to attend, which was manifestly still worse. "There is a Town Meeting, no sort of regard being had to any qualification of voters, but all the inferior people

meet together; and at a late meeting the inhabitants of other towns who happened to be in town, mixed with them, and made, they say themselves, near 3000, — their newspapers say 4000, when it is not likely there are 1500 legal voters in the town. It is in other words being under the government of a mob. This has given the lower part of the people such a sense of their importance that a gentleman does not meet with what used to be common civility, and we are sinking into perfect barbarism. . . . The spirit of anarchy which prevails in Boston is more than I am able to cope with.” The instigators of the mob, it was well known, were certain artful and self-seeking demagogues, of whom the chief had formerly been James Otis; but in late years Mr. Otis, “with his mob-high eloquence,” had given way to an abler man, Samuel Adams, than whom, Mr. Hutchinson thought, there was not “a greater incendiary in the King’s dominion, or a man of greater malignity of heart, [or one] who less scruples any measure however criminal to accomplish his purposes.”

The letter, undated and undirected, in which Thomas Hutchinson pronounced this deliberate judgment on Samuel Adams, was probably written

about the time of his accession to the Governorship; that is to say, about the time when Mr. Johnson, the Connecticut Agent, was writing to Wedderburn that "the people seem to grow weary of altercations," and that "a little discreet conduct on both sides" would perfectly restore cordial relations between Britain and her colonies. In the way of "a little discreet conduct," even a very little, not much was to be hoped for from either Governor Hutchinson or Samuel Adams in their dealings with each other. Unfortunately, they *had* dealings with each other: in the performance of official functions, their incommensurable and repellent minds were necessarily brought to bear upon the same matters of public concern. Both, unfortunately, lived in Boston and were likely any day to come face to face round the corner of some or other narrow street of that small town. That reciprocal exasperation engendered by reasonable propinquity, so essential to the life of altercations, was therefore a perpetual stimulus to both men, confirming each in his obstinate opinion of the other as a malicious and dangerous enemy of all that men hold dear. Thus it was that during the years 1771 and 1772, when if ever it appeared that others were "growing weary of alter-

cations," these honorable men and trusted leaders did what they could to perpetuate the controversy. By giving or taking occasion to recall ancient grudges or revive fruitless disputes, wittingly or unwittingly they together managed during this time of calm to keep the dying embers alive against the day when some rising wind might blow them into devouring flames.

With Samuel Adams it was a point of principle to avoid discreet conduct as much as possible. In his opinion, the great crisis which was his soul's abiding place, wherein he nourished his mind and fortified his will, admitted of no compromise. Good will was of no avail in dealing with the "Conspirators against our Liberties," the very essence of whose tactics it was to assume the mask of benevolence, and so divide, and by dividing disarm, the people; "flattering those who are pleased with flattery; forming connections with them, introducing Levity, Luxury, and Indolence, and assuring them that if they are quiet the Ministry will alter their Measures." During these years there was no power in the course of events or in the tongue of man to move him in the conviction that "if the Liberties of America are ever completely ruined, it will in all probability be the

consequence of a mistaken notion of *prudence*, which leads men to acquiesce in measures of the most destructive tendency for the sake of present ease." Never, therefore, were "the political affairs of America in a more dangerous state" than when the people had seemingly grown weary of altercations and Parliament could endure an entire session "without one offensive measure." The chief danger of all was that the people would think there was no danger. Millions could never be enslaved by a few "if all possessed the independent spirit of *Brutus* who to his immortal honor *expelled the proud Tyrant of Rome*." During the years of apathy and indifference Samuel Adams accordingly gave his days and nights, with undiminished enthusiasm and a more trenchant acerbity, to the task of making Brutuses of the men of Boston that the fate of Rome might not befall America.

They were assured in many an essay by this new Candidus that

The liberties of our country, the freedom of our civil constitution, are worth defending at all hazards: and it is our duty to defend them against all attacks. We have received them as a fair inheritance from our worthy ancestors. They purchased them for us with



toil and danger and expense of treasure and blood; and transmitted them to us with care and diligence. It will bring an everlasting mark of infamy upon the present generation, enlightened as it is, if we should suffer them to be wrested from us by violence without a struggle; or be cheated out of them by the artifices of false and designing men. Of the latter we are in most danger at present. Let us therefore be aware of it. Let us contemplate our forefathers and posterity; and resolve to maintain the rights bequeathed to us from the former, for the sake of the latter. Instead of sitting down satisfied with the efforts we have already made, *which is the wish of our enemies*, the necessity of the times, more than ever, calls for our utmost circumspection, deliberation, fortitude and perseverance. Let us remember that "if we suffer tamely a lawless attack upon our liberty, we encourage it, and involve others in our doom!" It is a very serious consideration, which should deeply impress our minds, that *millions yet unborn may be the miserable sharers in the event*.

These were days when many a former Brutus seemed ready to betray the cause. Deserted by James Otis, whom he had supplanted, and by John Hancock, whose great influence he had formerly exploited and whom he had "led about like an ape," as was currently reported, Samuel Adams suffered a measure of eclipse. The Assembly would no longer do his bidding in respect to the vital question of whether the General

Court might be called by the Governor to meet outside of Boston; and it even imposed upon him, as one of a committee, the humiliating task of presenting an address to Mr. Hutchinson, acknowledging his right to remove the legislature to any place he liked — “to Housatonic, in the western extreme of the province,” if he thought fit. There was even grave danger that the Governor would be satisfied with this concession and would recall the Court to sit in Boston. Boston was indeed the very place where Samuel Adams wished to have it sit; but to attain a right end in a wrong manner would be to suffer a double defeat, losing at once the point of principle and the grievance necessary for maintaining the contention. Friends of the Government were much elated at the waning influence of the Chief Incendiary; and Mr. Sparhawk condescended to express a certain sympathy for their common enemy, now that he was so much diminished, “harassed, dependent, in their power.” It was indeed under great difficulties, during these years when Massachusetts was almost without annals, that Samuel Adams labored to make Brutuses of the men of Boston.

So far deserted by his friends, Samuel Adams might never have succeeded in overcoming these

difficulties without the assistance presently rendered by his enemies. Of those who were of invaluable aid to him in this way, Thomas Hutchinson was one. The good Governor, having read his instructions, knew what his duties were. One of them manifestly was to stand in defense of Government; and, when Government was every day being argumentatively attacked, to provide, as a counter-irritant, arguments in defense of Government. Imagining that facts determined conclusions and conclusions directed conduct, Mr. Hutchinson hoped to diminish the influence of Samuel Adams by showing that the latter's facts were wrong, and that his inferences, however logically deduced, were therefore not to be taken seriously. "I have taken much pains," he says, "to procure writers to answer the pieces in the newspapers which do so much mischief among the people, and have two or three engaged with Draper, besides a new press, and a young printer who says he will not be frightened, and I hope for some good effect."

The Governor had read his instructions, but not the mind of Samuel Adams or the minds of the many men who, like the Chief Incendiary, were prepared "to cultivate the sensations of

freedom." Perhaps the only "good effect" of his "pieces" was to furnish excellent theses for Samuel Adams to dispute upon, which he did with unrivaled shrewdness each week in the *Boston Gazette* under the thin disguise of Candidus, Valerius Poplicola, or Vindex. To this last name, Vindex, Mr. Hutchinson thought there might appropriately have been added another, such as Malignus or Invidus. And indeed of all these disputative essays, in the *Boston Gazette* or in Mr. Draper's paper, one may say that the apparent aim was to win a dialectic victory and the obvious result to prove that ill will existed by exhibiting it.

Thomas Hutchinson's faith in the value of disputation was not easily disturbed; and after two years, when it appeared that his able lieutenants writing in Mr. Draper's newspaper were still as far as ever from bringing the controversy to a conclusion, he could no longer refrain from trying his own practiced hand at an argument — which he did in a carefully prepared address to the General Court, delivered January 6, 1773. "I have pleased myself for several years," he said, "with hopes that the cause [of the "present disturbed and disordered state" of government]

would cease of itself, and the effect with it, but I am disappointed; and I may not any longer, consistent with my duty to the King, and my regard to the interests of the province, delay communicating my sentiments to you upon a matter of so great importance." The cause of their present difficulties Mr. Hutchinson thought as evident as the fact itself: a disturbed state of government having always followed, must have been caused by the denial of the authority of Parliament to make laws binding the province. Upon a right resolution of this question everything depended.

The Governor accordingly confined himself to presenting, all in good temper, a concise and remarkably well-articulated argument to prove that "no line can be drawn between the supreme authority of Parliament and the total independence of the colonies"; of which argument the conclusion must be, inasmuch as the total independence of the colonies was not conceivably any one's thought, that supreme authority rested with Parliament. This conclusion once admitted, it was reasonable to suppose that disturbances would cease; for "if the supremacy of Parliament shall no longer be denied, it will follow that the

mere exercise of its authority can be no matter of grievance." In closing, his Excellency expressed the desire, in case the two Houses did not agree with his exposition of the Constitution, to know their objections. "They may be convincing to me, or I may be able to satisfy you of the insufficiency of them. In either case, I hope we shall put an end to those irregularities which ever will be the portion of a government where the supreme authority is controverted." In this roundabout way, Governor Hutchinson finally reached as a conclusion the prepossession with which he began; namely, that whereas a disturbed state of government is, *ex hypothesi*, a vital evil, assertions or denials which tend to cause the evil must be unfounded.

It happened that both Houses, the lower House especially, remained unconvinced by the Governor's exposition of the Constitution; and both Houses took advantage of his invitation to present their objections. The committee which the lower House appointed to formulate a reply found their task no slight one, not from any doubt that Mr. Hutchinson was in error, but from the difficulty of constructing an argument that might be regarded as polemically adequate. At the

request of Major Hawley, John Adams was accordingly "invited, requested, and urged to meet the committee, which he did every evening till the report was finished." When the first draft of a reply, probably drawn by Dr. Joseph Warren, was presented to Mr. Adams for his criticism, he "modestly suggested to them the expediency of leaving out many popular and eloquent periods, and of discussing the question with the Governor upon principles more especially legal and constitutional," there being in this first draft, so Mr. Adams thought, "no answer, nor any attempt to answer the Governor's legal and constitutional arguments, such as they were." And so, being "very civilly requested" by the committee to make such changes in the draft as seemed to him desirable, Mr. Adams "drew a line over the most eloquent parts of the oration they had before them, and introduced those legal and historical authorities which appear on the record."

The reply, prepared in this way and finally adopted by the Assembly, was longer and more erudite than Mr. Hutchinson's address. To meet the Governor's major premise and thus undermine his entire argument, legal precedents and the facts of history were freely drawn upon to prove



that the colonies were properly "outside of the Realm," and therefore, although parts of the Empire by virtue of being under the special jurisdiction of the Crown, not subject in all matters to parliamentary legislation. Law and history thus supported the contention, contrary to the Governor's assertion, that a line not only could be but always had been "drawn between the supreme authority of Parliament and the total independence of the colonies." Apart from any question of law or fact, the Assembly thought it of high practical importance that this line should be maintained in the future as in the past; for, "if there be no such line," none could deny the Governor's inference that "either the colonies are vassals of the Parliament, or they are totally independent"; upon which the Assembly would observe only that, "as it cannot be supposed to have been the intention of the parties in the compact that we should be reduced to a state of vassalage, the conclusion is that it was their sense that we were thus independent." With very few exceptions, everyone who was of the patriot way of thinking regarded the Assembly's reply as a complete refutation of the argument presented in Governor Hutchinson's address.

In the Governor's opinion, the disturbed state of government to which he had referred in his address was at this time brought to the highest pitch by the committees of correspondence recently established throughout the province—an event long desired and now brought to pass by Samuel Adams. That something might be done by a coördinated system of local committees was an “undigested thought” that dropped from Adams's mind while writing a letter to Arthur Lee in September, 1771. At that time, such was the general apathy of the people, it would clearly “be an arduous task for any man to attempt to awaken a sufficient Number in the colonies to so grand an undertaking.” But Samuel Adams, who thought “nothing should be despaired of,” took upon himself the performance of this arduous task. Such committees, if they were anywhere needed, were certainly needed in Massachusetts, where the people labored under a “state of perfect Despotism,” daily submitting to be ruled by a native Governor who refused to accept a grant from the General Court, received his salary from London, and governed the province according to his instructions. “Is it not enough,” asked Valerius Poplicola in the *Gazette*, “to have a Governor . . . pen-

*sioned* by those on whom his existence depends? . . . Is Life, Property, and Every Thing dear and sacred, to be now submitted to the Decisions of PENSION'D JUDGES, holding their places during the pleasure of *such* a Governor, and a Council *perhaps* overawed?"

Confronted by so unprecedented a situation, it occurred to Samuel Adams that perhaps Mr. Hutchinson himself might be induced to come to his assistance. Late in 1772 he accordingly got the Boston town meeting to present to the Governor an address expressing great alarm at the establishment of salaries for judges, and praying that the legislature, which was to meet the 2d of December, might not be prorogued. It was possible that in replying the Governor might take a "high tone," refusing the request as an interference with his own prerogative; but, as it was clearly the right of the people to petition, for the Governor to refuse would be, Samuel Adams thought, to "put himself *in the wrong*, in the opinion of every honest and sensible man; the consequence of which will be that such measures as the people may determine upon to save themselves . . . will be the more reconcilable even to cautious minds, and thus we may expect that unanimity which we wish

for." The Governor, in a tone that might be called "high," did in fact object to the request as not properly a function of town meetings and thus furnished the occasion for organizing the committees which he thought so disturbing to the state of government.

It was on November 2, 1772, upon a motion of Samuel Adams, that a committee was appointed by a town meeting in Faneuil Hall "to state the Rights of the colonies and of this Province in particular, as Men, as Christians, and as Subjects; to communicate and publish the same to the several Towns in this Province and to the World as the sense of this Town, with the Infringements and Violations thereof that have been, or from time to time may be made . . . requesting of each Town a free communication of their Sentiments on this Subject." The report of the committee, adopted November 20, announced to the world that, as men, the colonists, and those of Massachusetts in particular, were possessed of certain "Natural Rights," among them the right to life, liberty, and property; and that, inasmuch as "men enter into Society . . . by voluntary consent," they still retained "every Natural Right not expressly given up or by the nature of the So-

cial Compact necessarily ceded." Being Christians as well as men, the colonists enjoyed also those rights formulated in "the institutes of the great Lawgiver and head of the Christian Church, . . . written and promulgated in the New Testament." Lastly, being Englishmen, the colonists were, "by the Common Law of England, *exclusive of all charters from the Crown*, . . . entitled, and by the acts of the British Parliament . . . declared to be entitled to all the Liberties and Privileges of Subjects born . . . within the Realm." The infringements which had been made upon these rights, although well known, were once more stated at length; and all the towns of the province were requested, in case they agreed with the sentiments of the Town of Boston, to unite in a common effort "to rescue from impending ruin our happy and glorious Constitution." For its part, the Town of Boston was confident that the wisdom of the other towns, as well as their regard for themselves and the rising generation, would not suffer them "to dose, or set supinely indifferent on the brink of destruction, while the Iron hand of oppression is daily tearing the choicest Fruit from the fair Tree of Liberty."

Moderate men might think, in the winter of

1773, that "the Iron hand of oppression tearing the choicest Fruit from the Fair Tree of Liberty" was a figure of speech which did not shape itself with nice flexibility to the exact form and pressure of observable facts. It is the limitation of moderate men to be much governed by observable facts; and if the majority could not at once rise to the rhetoric of Samuel Adams, it was doubtless because they had not his instinctive sense of the Arch Conspirator's truly implacable enmity to America. The full measure of this enmity Mr. Adams lived in the hope of some day revealing.

It was of course well known that Mr. Bernard had formerly written home letters most injurious to the province; and in 1770 there "was abundant reason to be jealous," as Samuel Adams, writing on behalf of the Town of Boston, assured Benjamin Franklin, "that the most mischievous and virulent accounts have been lately sent to Administration from Castle William," no doubt from the Commissioners of the Customs. Conveying malicious and unfounded misrepresentations of America under the seal of official correspondence had indeed long been a favorite means of mending the fortunes of those decayed gentlemen and bankrupt politicians whose ambition

it was to rise in office by playing the sycophant to some great man in England. Mr. Bernard had "played this game," and had been found out at it, as every one knew. But Mr. Bernard was no American; and it was scarcely to be imagined that Mr. Hutchinson, who boasted "that his Ancestors were of the first Rank and figure in the Country, who . . . had all the Honors lavished upon him which his Fellow-Citizens had it in their power to bestow, who professed the strongest attachment to his native Country and the most tender feelings for its Rights, . . . should be so lost to all sense of Gratitude and public Love as to aid the Designs of despotick power for the sake of rising a single step higher."

This was indeed scarcely to be imagined, yet Samuel Adams imagined it perfectly. Before there was any material evidence of the fact, he was able, by reasonable inference, to erect well-grounded suspicions into a kind of working hypothesis. Mr. Hutchinson, Governor of the Province, was an Enemy of Liberty with many English friends; he would be required by official duty and led by personal inclination to maintain a regular correspondence with high officials in England; from which the conclusion was that



Thomas Hutchinson, professed friend of America, was a traitor, in secret alienating the affections of the King from his loyal subjects. Samuel Adams knew this well; and now, after all these years, the material evidence necessary to convince men of little faith was at hand. Under circumstances that might be regarded as providential, Thomas Hutchinson was at last unmasked.

The prelude to this dramatic performance was pronounced in the Massachusetts Assembly, one day in June, 1773, by Mr. John Hancock, who darkly declared that within eight and forty hours a discovery of great pith and moment would be made to the House. On the next day but one, Samuel Adams arose and desired the galleries cleared, as there were matters to lay before the members which the members only had a right to know of. When the galleries were cleared he informed the House that certain letters, written by high officials in the province and extremely hostile to the rights and liberties of America, had been procured in England and transmitted to a gentleman who had in turn placed them in his, Mr. Adams's, hands, but with the strictest injunction that they be returned without being copied or printed. Mr. Adams had given his pledge to this

effect; and, if the House would receive them on these terms, he would be glad to read the letters, no restriction having been placed on their being read. They were read accordingly; and a committee having been appointed to make recommendations, it was at length resolved by the House of Assembly that certain letters presented to it by Mr. Samuel Adams tended and were manifestly designed to undermine the Constitution and establish a despotic power in the province. The proceedings of the House being spread abroad, it soon became everywhere known that only the pledged word of the House stood in the way of revelations highly damaging to the public character of Governor Hutchinson.

This outcome of the matter, however gratifying to Samuel Adams, did not satisfy Governor Hutchinson. After there had been "buzzed about for three or four months a story of something that would amaze everybody," and these dark rumors being "spread through all the towns in the province and everybody's expectations . . . raised," it was exasperating to his pragmatic nature to have nothing more definite transpire than that the something which would amaze everybody would indeed amaze everybody if only

it could be made known. It should at least be made known to the person most concerned. The Governor therefore requested the Assembly to furnish him copies of the letters which were attributed to him and declared by the House to be destructive of the Constitution. In reply, the House sent certain dates only. The House was of opinion that the Governor could easily make authentic copies of whatever letters he had written at these dates, if he had written any; and such copies, being furnished to the Assembly, might be published, and the whole matter thus cleared up without violating the pledged word of anyone.

With this request the Governor refused to comply, on the ground that it would be improper to reveal his private correspondence and contrary to instructions to reveal that of a public nature. He would say, however, that he had written letters on the days mentioned, but in these letters there was no statement of fact or expression of opinion not already well known. What his opinions were the Assembly and the world might very well gather from his published speeches and his *History of Massachusetts Bay*. It could scarcely be maintained that he had ever lacked frankness in the expression of his opinions; and while his

opinions might be thought destructive of the Constitution, it was rather late to be amazed at them. In any case, the Assembly was assured by the Governor that his letters neither tended "nor were designed to subvert, but rather to preserve entire the constitution of government" as established by the charter of the province.

A great many people besides the Governor desired to see letters the substance of which could be so differently understood. Samuel Adams probably preferred not to be forced to print them. knowing their contents, he may have thought that here was a case of those "dangers which, being known, lose half their power for evil"; besides, having pledged his word, he wished to keep it. Yet the pressure of public opinion, becoming every day greater, was difficult to resist, particularly by men who were firm believers in the wisdom of the people. Moreover, it presently appeared that there was no longer any point in refusing to publish the letters, inasmuch as Mr. Hancock assured the House that men on the street were, in some way not known, possessed of copies, some of which had been placed in his hands. Mr. Hancock's copies being found on comparison to be accurate rescripts of the letters

which had been read in the House, a committee was accordingly appointed to consider how the House might come into honorable possession of the originals; from which committee Mr. Hawley soon reported that Samuel Adams had informed them that the gentleman from whom he had received the letters now consented to their being copied, seeing that they had already been copied, and printed, seeing that they were already widely circulated; whereupon the House, considering itself in honorable possession, ordered the letters all published.

Nevertheless it was thought expedient, before issuing the letters, to print and circulate such a series of "Resolves" as might prepare the public mind for what was to come later. This was accordingly done. The "Resolves," bearing date of June 16, 1773, indicated clearly and at length the precise significance of the letters; declared it to be the humble opinion of the House that it was not to the interest of the Crown to continue in high places persons "who are known to have, with great industry, though secretly, endeavored to undermine, alter, and overthrow the Constitution of the province"; and concluded by praying "that his Majesty would be pleased to remove

. . . forever from the government thereof" the Honorable Andrew Oliver and his Excellency Thomas Hutchinson.

His Majesty did not remove Mr. Hutchinson; but the Governor's usefulness, from every point of view, was at an end. When the notorious letters were finally printed, it appeared that there were seventeen in all, of which six were written by Mr. Hutchinson in the years 1768 and 1769. These latter documents did not in fact add anything to the world's stock of knowledge; but they had been so heralded, ushered in with so much portentous explication that they scarcely needed to be read to be understood. "Had they been Chevy Chase," the Governor said, the people would have believed them "full of evil and treason." It was indeed the perfect fruit of Samuel Adams's labors that the significance of Mr. Hutchinson's letters had in some manner become independent of their contents. So awake were the people to the danger of being deceived, that whatever the Governor now said or ever had written was taken to be but the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.

Meanwhile, the attention of all patriots was diverted from the letters to a far more serious

matter; and when, on December 16, 1773, a cargo of the East India Company's tea, consigned among others to Thomas and Elisha Hutchinson, was thrown into Boston harbor, the great crisis, which Samuel Adams had done so much to make inevitable by virtue of thinking it so, was at last a reality. It was a limitation of Thomas Hutchinson's excellent administrative mind that he was wholly unaware of this crisis. In February of the next year, finding that "a little discreet conduct," or indeed any conduct on his part, was altogether without good effect, the Governor announced that he had "obtained leave from the King to go to England." On the 1st of June, driving from his home to the foot of Dorchester Heights, he embarked on the *Minerva* and arrived in London one month later. It was his expectation that after a brief absence, when General Gage by a show of military force should have brought the province to a reasonable frame of mind, he would return and assume again the responsibilities of his office. He never returned, but died in England on June 3, 1780, an unhappy and a homesick exile from the country which he loved.



## CHAPTER VI

### TESTING THE ISSUE

The die is now cast; the colonies must either submit or triumph.  
*George III.*

We hold these truths to be self-evident: that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty, and the pursuit of Happiness.

*Thomas Jefferson.*

Two months and ten days after Mr. Hutchinson embarked for England, John Adams, the Hon. Thomas Cushing, Mr. Samuel Adams, and Robert Treat Paine set out "from Boston, from Mr. Cushing's house, and rode to Coolidge's, where they dined . . . with a large company of gentlemen, who went out and prepared an entertainment for them at that place. A most kindly and affectionate meeting we had, and about four in the afternoon we took leave of them, amidst the kindest wishes and fervent prayers of every man in the company for our health and success. The

scene was truly affecting, beyond all description affecting." The four men who in this manner left Boston on the 10th of August, 1774, were bound for Philadelphia to attend the first Continental Congress. Even Samuel Adams, in excellent spirits, a little resplendent and doubtless a little uncomfortable in his new suit and new silk hose, could scarcely have known that they were about to share in one of the decisive events in the history of the modern world.

The calling of the Continental Congress had followed hard upon those recent measures of the British Government which no reasonable man could doubt were designed to reduce the colonies to a state of slavery. In May, 1773, the East India Company, whose privileges in India had just been greatly restricted, was given permission to export tea from its English warehouses directly to America, free of all English customs and excise duties. The threepenny duty in America was indeed retained; but this small tax would not prevent the Company from selling its teas in America at a lower price than other importers, either smugglers or legitimate traders, could afford. It was true the Americans were opposed to the threepenny tax, and they had bound themselves

not to import any dutied tea; yet neither the opposition to the tax nor the non-importation agreements entered into had prevented American merchants from importing, during the last three years, about 580,831 pounds of English tea, upon which the duty had been paid without occasioning much comment.

With these facts in mind, hard-headed American merchants, to whom the Company applied for information about the state of the tea trade in the colonies, assured the directors that the Americans drank a great deal of tea, which hitherto had been largely smuggled from Holland; and that, although they were in principle much opposed to the tax, "mankind in general are bound by interest," and "the Company can afford their teas cheaper than the Americans can smuggle them from foreigners, which puts the success of the design beyond a doubt."

The hard-headed merchants were doubtless much surprised at the universal outcry which was raised when it became known that the East India Company was preparing to import its teas into the colonies; and yet the strenuous opposition everywhere exhibited rather confirmed than refuted the philosophical reflection that "mankind

in general are bound by interest." Neither the New York and Philadelphia merchants who smuggled tea from Holland, nor the Boston and Charleston merchants who imported dutied tea from England, could see any advantage to them in having this profitable business taken over by the East India Company. Mr. Hancock, for example, was one of the Boston merchants who imported a good deal of dutied tea from England, a fact which was better known then than it has been since; and at Philadelphia John Adams was questioned rather closely about Mr. Hancock's violation of the non-importation agreement, in reply to which he could only say: "Mr. Hancock, I believe, is justifiable, but I am not certain whether he is strictly so." Justifiable or not, Mr. Hancock would not wish to see the entire tea trade of America in the hands of the East India Company.

And indeed to whose interest would it be to have an English company granted a monopoly of a thriving branch of American trade? To those, doubtless, who were the consignees of the Company, such as the sons of Thomas Hutchinson, or Mr. Abram Lott of New York. Certainly no private merchant "who is acquainted with the

operation of a monopoly . . . will send out or order tea to America when those who have it at first hand send to the same market." And therefore, since the Company have the whole supply, America will "ultimately be at their mercy to extort what price they please for their tea. And when they find their success in this article, they will obtain liberty to export their spices, silks, etc." This was the light in which the matter appeared to the New York Committee of Correspondence.

John Dickinson saw the matter in the same light, a light which his superior abilities enabled him to portray in more lurid colors. The conduct of the East India Company in Asia, he said,

has given ample proof how little they regard the laws of nations, the rights, liberties, or lives of men. They have levied war, excited rebellions, dethroned princes, and sacrificed millions for the sake of gain. The revenues of mighty kingdoms have centered in their coffers. And these not being sufficient to glut their avarice, they have, by the most unparalleled barbarities, extortions, and monopolies, stripped the miserable inhabitants of their property and reduced whole provinces to indigence and ruin . . . Thus having drained the sources of that immense wealth . . . they now, it seems, cast their eyes on America, a new theater, whereon to exercise their talents of rapine, oppression,

and cruelty. The monopoly of tea, is, I dare say, but a small part of the plan they have formed to strip us of our property. But thank God we are not Sea Poys, nor Marattas, but British subjects, who are born to liberty, who know its worth, and who prize it high.

For all of these reasons, therefore — because they were in principle opposed to taxation without consent, and by interest opposed to an English company monopolizing the tea trade, and perhaps because they desired to give a signal demonstration of the fact that they were neither Sea Poys nor Marattas — Americans were willing to resort to the use of force in order to maintain their own rights by depriving the East India Company of its privileges.

When Capt. Curling's ship arrived in Charleston, the people in that town, assembled to deal with the grave crisis, were somewhat uncertain what to do with the Company's tea. On the very ship which brought the Company's tea, there were some chests consigned to private merchants; and certain enthusiastic patriots attending the meeting of citizens affirmed that the importation of dutied tea by private merchants contrary to the non-importation agreement was no less destructive to liberty than the importation of tea

by the East India Company. "All this," it was said, "evinced a desire of not entering hastily into measures." In the end, the Company's tea was seized by the Collector and stored in the vaults under the Exchange. At New York and Philadelphia, the Company's tea ships were required to return to England without landing; and it was only at Boston, where Governor Hutchinson, whose sons had been appointed by the Company as its consignees, refused return clearance papers, that the tea, some £14,000 worth of it, was thrown into the harbor.

Throwing the tea into the harbor raised a sharp sense of resentment in the minds of Britons. The common feeling was that, unless the British Government was prepared to renounce all pretense of governing the colonies, something must be done. There were a few, such as Josiah Tucker, who thought that the thing to do was to give up the colonies; in their opinion, colonies were in any case more of a burden than an advantage, the supposed advantages of colonies being bound up with restrictions on trade, and restrictions on trade being contrary to the natural law by which commerce should be free. But the natural law was only a recent discovery not yet widely accepted in



England; and it did not occur to the average Briton that the colonies should be given up. The colonies, he supposed, were English colonies; and he thought the time had come to establish that fact. He had heard that the colonies had grievances. All he knew was that the Government had good-naturedly made concessions for the last ten years; and as for this new grievance about tea, the average Briton made out only that the Americans could buy their tea cheaper than he could himself.

Obviously the time had come for Old England to set the colonies right by showing less concession and more power. Four regiments, as General Gage said, would do the business. The average Briton therefore gave his cordial approval to four "coercive" measures, passed by overwhelming majorities in Parliament, which remodeled the Massachusetts charter, authorized the Governor to transfer to courts in other colonies or to England any cases involving a breach of the peace or the conduct of public officers, provided for quartering troops on the inhabitants, and closed the port of Boston until the East India Company should have been compensated for the loss of its tea. In order to make these measures effective,

General Gage, commander of the American forces, was made Governor of Massachusetts. To what extent he would find it necessary to use the military depended upon the Bostonians. "The die is now cast," the King wrote to Lord North; "the colonies must either submit or triumph." The King's judgment was not always good; but it must be conceded that in this instance he had penetrated to the very center of the situation.

Massachusetts, very naturally, wished not to submit, but whether she could triumph without the support of the other colonies was more than doubtful; and it was to obtain this support, to devise if possible a method of resistance agreeable to all, that the Congress was now assembling at Philadelphia. The spirit in which the colonies received the news of the Boston Port Bill augured well for union, for in every colony it was felt that this was a challenge which could not be evaded without giving the lie to ten years of high talk about the inalienable rights of Englishmen. As Charles James Fox said, "all were taught to consider the town of Boston as suffering in the common cause." This sentiment John Adams found everywhere expressed — found everywhere, as he took his leisurely journey southward, that people

were "very firm" in their determination to support Massachusetts against the oppression of the British Government.

In respect to the measures which should be adopted to achieve the end desired, there was not the same unanimity. Mr. Adams, at the age of thirty-eight years, never having been out of New England, kept his eyes very wide open as he entered the foreign colonies of New York and Pennsylvania. In New York he was much impressed with the "elegant country seats," with the bountiful hospitality, and the lavish way of living. "A more elegant breakfast I never saw" — this was at Mr. Scott's house — "rich plate, a very large silver coffee-pot, a very large silver tea-pot, napkins of the finest materials, toast, and bread and butter in great perfection," and then, to top it off, "a plate of beautiful peaches, another of pears, and another of plums, and a musk-melon were placed upon the table." Nevertheless, in spite of the friendliness shown to him personally, in spite of the sympathy which, abstractly considered, the New Yorkers expressed for the sad state of Boston, Mr. Adams was made to understand that if it came to practical measures for the support of Massachusetts, many diverse currents

of opinion and interest would make themselves felt.

New York was "very firm" in the cause, certainly, but "Mr. MacDougall gave a caution to avoid every expression which looked like an allusion to the last appeal. He says there is a powerful party here who are intimidated by fears of a civil war, and they have been induced to acquiesce by assurances that there was no danger, and that a peaceful cessation of commerce would effect relief. Another party, he says, are intimidated lest the leveling spirit of the New England colonies should propagate itself into New York. Another party are instigated by Episcopalian prejudices against New England. Another party are merchants largely concerned in navigation, and therefore afraid of non-importation, non-consumption, and non-exportation agreements. Another party are those who are looking up to Government for favors."

These interests were doubtless well enough represented by the New York deputies to the Congress, whom Mr. Adams now saw for the first time. Mr. Jay, it was said, was a good student of the law and a hard worker. Mr. Low, "they say, will profess attachment to the cause of liberty,

but his sincerity is doubted." Mr. Alsop was thought to be of good heart, but unequal, as Mr. Scott affirmed, "to the trust in point of abilities." Mr. Duane—this was Mr. Adams's own impression—"has a sly, surveying eye, . . . very sensible, I think, and very artful." And finally there was Mr. Livingston, "a downright, straightforward man," who reminded Mr. Adams that Massachusetts had once hung some Quakers, affirmed positively that civil war would follow the renunciation of allegiance to Britain, and threw out vague hints of the Goths and Vandals.

Confiding these matters to his *Diary* and keeping his own opinion, Mr. Adams passed on to Philadelphia. There the Massachusetts men were cordially welcomed, twice over, but straightway cautioned against two gentlemen, one of whom was "Dr. Smith, the Provost of the College, who is looking up to Government for an American Episcopate and a pair of lawn sleeves"—a very soft, polite man, "insinuating, adulating, sensible, learned, insidious, indefatigable," with art enough, "and refinement upon art, to make impressions even upon Mr. Dickinson and Mr. Reed." In Pennsylvania, as in every colony, Mr. Adams

found, there was a tribe of people "exactly like the tribe, in the Massachusetts, of Hutchinsonian Addressers." Some of this tribe had managed to elbow their way into the committees of deputies to the Congress, at least from the middle colonies, and probably from South Carolina as well.

The "most spirited and consistent of any" of the deputies were the gentlemen from Virginia, among whom were Mr. Henry and Mr. R. H. Lee, said to be the Demosthenes and the Cicero of America. The latter, Mr. Adams liked much, a "masterly man" who was very strong for the most vigorous measures. But it seemed that even Mr. Lee was strong for vigorous measures only because he was "absolutely certain that the same ship which carries hence the resolutions will bring back the redress." If he supposed otherwise, he "should be for exceptions."

From the first day of the Congress it was known that the Massachusetts men were in favor of "vigorous measures," vigorous measures being understood to mean the adoption of strict non-importation, non-consumption, and non-exportation agreements. There were moments when John Adams thought even these measures tame and unheroic: "When Demosthenes (God forgive

the vanity of recollecting his example) went ambassador from Athens to the other states of Greece, to excite a confederacy against Phillip, he did not go to propose a Non-Importation or Non-Consumption Agreement. . . ." For all this, the Massachusetts men kept themselves well in the background, knowing that there was much jealousy and some fear of New England leadership and well aware that the recent experience with non-importation agreements had greatly diminished, in the mercantile colonies of New York, Pennsylvania, and South Carolina, the enthusiasm for such experiments.

The trouble with non-importation agreements, as Major Hawley had told John Adams, was that "they will not be faithfully observed; that the Congress have no power to enforce obedience to their laws; that they will be like a legislative without an executive." Did Congress have, or could it assume, authority to compel men to observe its resolutions, to compel them to observe, for example, a non-importation agreement? This was a delicate question upon which opinion was divided. "We have no legal authority," said Mr. Rutledge, "and obedience to our determinations will only follow the reasonableness, the apparent utility, and



necessity of the measures we adopt. We have no coercive or legislative authority." If this was so, the non-intercourse policy would doubtless prove a broken reed. Massachusetts men were likely to be of another opinion, were likely to agree with Patrick Henry, who affirmed that "Government is dissolved. Fleets and armies and the present state of things show that government is dissolved. We are in a state of nature, Sir!" If they were indeed in a state of nature, it was perhaps high time that Congress should assume the powers of a government, in which case it might be possible to adopt and to enforce non-intercourse measures. In this gingerly way did the deputies lift the curtain and peer down the road to revolution.

The deputies, like true Britons, contrived to avoid the highly theoretical question of authority, and began straightway to concern themselves with the practical question of whether the Congress, with or without authority, should recommend the adoption of strict non-intercourse agreements. Upon this question, as the chief issue, the deputies were divided into nearly equal groups. Mr. Galloway, Mr. Duane, and Mr. Rutledge were perhaps the leaders of those, probably a majority at first, who were opposed to

such vigorous measures, fearing that they were intended as a cloak to cover the essentially revolutionary designs of the shrewd New Englanders. "We have too much reason to suspect that independence is aimed at," Mr. Low warned the Congress; and Mr. Galloway could see that while the Massachusetts men were in "behavior very modest, yet they are not so much so as not to throw out hints, which like straws and feathers show from which point in the compass the wind comes." In the early days of the Congress, if we are to believe Mr. Hutchinson, this cold north wind was so much disliked that the New York and New Jersey deputies, "and others," carried a vote against the adoption of non-intercourse agreements, "agreed to present a petition to the King," and "expected to break up, when letters arrived from Dr. Franklin which put an end to the petition."

The Journals of the Congress do not record any vote of this kind; but a number of things are known to have occurred in the Congress which the Journals do not record. On September 17, the famous "Suffolk Resolves" were laid before the deputies for their approval. The resolutions had been adopted by a county convention in Massa-

chusetts, and in substance they recommended to the people of Massachusetts to form a government independent of that of which General Gage was the Governor, urged them meanwhile to arm themselves in their own defense, and assured them that "no obedience is due from this province to either or any part" of the Coercive Acts. These were indeed "vigorous measures"; and when the resolutions came before Congress, "long and warm debates ensued between the parties," Mr. Galloway afterwards remembered; and he says that when the vote to approve them was finally carried, "two of the dissenting members presumed to offer their protest to it in writing which was negatived," and when they then insisted that the "tender of the protest and the negative should be entered on the minutes, this was also rejected."

Later in the month, September 28, Mr. Galloway introduced his famous plan for a "British-American Parliament" as a method for permanent reconciliation. The motion to enter the plan on the minutes and to refer it for further consideration gave rise to "long and warm debates," the motion being carried by a majority of one colony; but subsequently, probably on October 21, it was voted to expunge the plan, together with all resolutions

referring to it, from the minutes. Nothing, as Benjamin Franklin wrote from England, could so encourage the British Government to persist in its oppressive policy as the knowledge that dissensions existed in the Congress; and since these dissensions did unfortunately exist, there was a widespread feeling that it would be the part of wisdom to conceal them as much as possible.

No doubt a majority of the deputies, when they first read the Suffolk Resolutions, were amazed that the rash New Englanders should venture to pledge themselves so frankly to rebellion. Certainly no one who thought himself a loyal subject of King George could even contemplate rebellion; but, on the other hand, to leave Massachusetts in the lurch after so much talk of union and the maintenance of American rights would make loyal Americans look a little ridiculous. That would be to show themselves lambs as soon as Britons had shown themselves lions, which was precisely what their enemies in England boasted they would do. Confronted by this difficult dilemma, moderate men without decided opinions began to fix their attention less upon the exact nature of the measures they were asked to support, and more upon the probable

effect of such measures upon the British Government. It might be true, and all reports from England seemed to point that way, that the British Government was only brandishing the sword *in terrorem*, to see whether the Americans would not run at once to cover; in which case it would be wiser for all loyal subjects to pledge themselves even to rebellion, the prospect being so very good that Britain would quickly sheathe its sword and present instead the olive branch, saying, "This is what I intended to offer." Therefore, rather than leave Massachusetts in the lurch and so give the lie to the boasted unity of the colonies, many moderate and loyal subjects voted to approve the Suffolk Resolutions, which they thought very rash and ill-advised measures.

Whatever differences still prevailed, if indeed practical men could hold out after the accomplished fact, might be bridged and compromised by adopting those petitions and addresses which the timid thought sufficient and at the same time by subscribing to and "recommending" those non-intercourse agreements which the bolder sort thought essential.

This compromise was in fact effected. The Congress unanimously adopted the moderate ad-

dresses which Lord Chatham afterwards praised for their masterly exposition of true constitutional principles; but it likewise adopted, also unanimously, a series of resolutions known as the Association, to which the deputies subscribed their names. By signing the Association, the deputies bound themselves, and recommended the people in all the colonies to bind themselves, not to import, after December 1, 1774, any commodities from Great Britain or Ireland, or molasses, syrups, sugars, and coffee from the British plantations, or East India Company tea from any place, or wines from Madeira, or foreign indigo; not to consume, after March 1, 1775, any of these commodities; and not to export, after September 10, 1775, any commodities whatever to Great Britain, Ireland, or the West Indies, "except rice to Europe." It was further recommended that a committee be formed in each city, town, and county, whose business it should be to observe the conduct of all persons, those who refused to sign the Association as well as those who signed it, and to publish the names of all persons who did not observe the agreements there entered into, "to the end that all such foes of the rights of British-America may be publicly known and universally condemned as

the enemies of American liberty"; and it was likewise recommended that the committees should inspect the customs entries frequently, that they should seize all goods imported contrary to the recommendation of the Association and reship them, or, if the owner preferred, sell them at public auction, the owner to be recompensed for the first costs, the profits, if any, to be devoted to relieving the people of Boston.

Having thus adopted a Petition to the King, a Memorial to the Inhabitants of the British Colonies, and an Address to the People of Great Britain, and having recommended a certain line of conduct to be followed by all loyal Americans, the first Continental Congress adjourned. It had assumed no "coercive or legislative authority"; obedience to its determinations would doubtless depend, as Mr. Rutledge had said, upon "the reasonableness, the apparent utility and necessity" of its recommendations.

"There can be no doubt," the Earl of Dartmouth is reported to have said, "that every one who had signed the Association was guilty of treason." The Earl of Dartmouth was not counted one of the enemies of America; and if this was his opinion of the action of the first Continental



Congress, Lord North's supporters in Parliament, a great majority since the recent elections, were not likely to take a more favorable view of it. Nevertheless, when the American question came up for consideration in the winter of 1775, "conciliation" was a word frequently heard on all sides, and even corrupt ministers were understood to be dallying with schemes of accommodation. In January and February great men were sending agents, and even coming themselves, to Dr. Franklin to learn what in his opinion the colonies would be satisfied with. Lord Chatham, as might be guessed, was meditating a plan. On the 29th of January, he came to Craven Street and showed it to Franklin, who made notes upon it, and later went out to Hayes, two hours' ride from London, where he remained for four hours listening to the easy flow of the Great Commoner's eloquence without being able to get any of his own ideas presented.

Fortified by the presence if not by the advice of Franklin, Lord Chatham laid his plan before Parliament on the 1st of February. He would have an explicit declaration of the dependence of the colonies on the Crown and Parliament in all matters of trade and an equally explicit declara-

tion that no tax should be imposed upon the colonies without their consent; and when the Congress at Philadelphia should have acknowledged the supremacy of the Crown and Parliament and should have made a free and perpetual grant of revenue, then he would have all the obnoxious acts passed since 1764, and especially the Coercive Acts, totally repealed. Lord Sandwich, in a warm speech, moved to reject these proposals at once; and when the vote was taken it was found that 61 noble lords were in favor of rejecting them at once, while only 31 were opposed to so doing.

Lord North was perhaps less opposed to reconciliation than other noble lords were. A few days later Franklin was approached by Admiral Howe, who was understood to know the First Minister's mind, to learn whether he might not suggest something for the Government to go upon. The venerable Friend of the Human Race was willing enough to set down on paper some "Hints" which Admiral Howe might think advisable to show to ministers. It happened, however, that the "Hints" went far beyond anything the Government had in mind. Ministers would perhaps be willing to repeal the Tea Act and the Boston Port Bill; but they felt strongly that the act regulating the Massachusetts

charter must stand as "an example of the power of Parliament." Franklin, on the other hand, was certain that "while Parliament claims the right of altering American constitutions at pleasure, there can be no agreement." Since the parties were so far apart, it seemed useless to continue the informal negotiation, and on February 20, Lord North laid before Parliament his own plan for effecting an accommodation.

Perhaps, after all, it was not his own plan; for Lord North, much inclined to regard himself as the King's minister, was likely to subordinate his wishes to those of his master. King George III, at all events, had his own ideas on conciliation. "I am a friend to holding out the olive branch," he wrote in February, "yet I believe that, when vigorous measures appear to be the only means, the colonies will submit." Knowing the King's ideas, as well as those of Dr. Franklin, Lord North accordingly introduced into Parliament the Resolution on Conciliation, which provided that when any colony should make provision "for contributing their proportion to the common defense, . . . and for the support of the civil government, and the administration of justice in such province, . . . it will be proper, . . . for so long as such provision

shall be made, . . . to forbear, in respect of such province, . . . to levy any Duty, Tax, or Assessment, . . . except . . . for the regulation of commerce." The minister's resolution, although by most of his supporters thought to be useless, was adopted by a vote of 274 to 88.

It was not the intention of the Government to hold out the olive branch by itself. Lord North, and perhaps the King also, hoped the colonies would accept it; but by all maxims of politics an olive branch was more likely to be accepted if the shining sword was presented at the same time as the only alternative. As early as the 10th of February, Lord North had introduced into Parliament a bill, finally passed March 30, "to restrain the trade and commerce" of the New England colonies to "Great Britain, Ireland, and the British islands in the West Indies," and to exclude these colonies from "carrying on any fishery on the banks of Newfoundland," it being "highly unfit that the inhabitants of the said provinces . . . should enjoy the same privileges of trade . . . to which his Majesty's faithful and obedient subjects are entitled." The provisions of this act were extended to the other colonies in April; and meantime measures were taken to strengthen the naval forces.

The first certain information that Lord North had extended the olive branch reached New York April 24, 1775, two weeks before the day fixed for the meeting of the second Continental Congress. Important changes had taken place since the first Congress, six months earlier, had sent forth its resolutions. In every colony there was a sufficient number of patriots who saw "the reasonableness, the apparent utility, and necessity" of forming the committees which the Association recommended; and these committees everywhere, with a marked degree of success, immediately set about convincing their neighbors of the utility and necessity of signing the non-importation agreement, or at least of observing it even if they were not disposed to sign it. To deny the reasonableness of the Association was now indeed much more difficult than it would have been before the Congress assembled; for the Congress, having published certain resolutions unanimously entered into, had come to be the symbol of America united in defense of its rights; and what American, if indeed one might call him such, would wish to be thought disloyal to America or an enemy of its liberties? It required a degree of assurance for any man to set up his individual judgment against the

deliberate and united judgment of the chosen representatives of all the colonies; and that must be indeed a very subtle mind which could draw the distinction between an enemy of liberty and a friend of liberty who was unwilling to observe the Association.

Some such subtle minds there were — a considerable number in most colonies who declared themselves friends of liberty but not of the Association, loyal to America but not to the Congress. One of these was Samuel Seabury, an Episcopalian clergyman living in Westchester County, New York, a vigorous, downright man, who at once expressed his sentiments in a forcible and logical manner, and with much sarcastic humor, in a series of pamphlets which were widely read and much commended by those who found in them their own views so effectively expressed. This Westchester Farmer — for so he signed himself — proclaimed that he had always been, and was still, a friend of liberty in general and of American liberty in particular. The late British measures he thought unwise and illiberal, and he had hoped that the Congress would be able to obtain redress, and perhaps even to effect a permanent reconciliation. But these hopes were seen to be vain

from the day when the Congress approved the Suffolk Resolutions and, instead of adopting Mr. Galloway's plan, adopted the Association. For no sane man could doubt that, under the thin disguise of "recommendations," Congress had assumed the powers of government and counseled rebellion. The obvious conclusion from this was that, if one could not be a loyal American without submitting to Congress, then it was impossible to be at the same time a loyal American and a loyal British subject.

But, if the problem were rightly considered, Mr. Seabury thought one might be loyal to America in the best sense without supporting Congress; for, apart from any question of legality, the Association was highly inexpedient, inasmuch as non-importation would injure America more than it injured England, and, for this reason if for no others, it would be found impossible to "bully and frighten the supreme government of the nation." Yet all this was beside the main point, which was that the action of Congress, whether expedient or not, was illegal. It was illegal because it authorized the committees to enforce the Association upon all alike, upon those who never agreed to observe it as well as upon those who did; and these commit-



tees, as everyone knew, were so enforcing it and were "imposing penalties upon those who have presumed to violate it." The Congress talked loudly of the tyranny of the British Government. Tyranny! Good Heavens! Was any tyranny worse than that of self-constituted committees which, in the name of liberty, were daily conducting the most hateful inquisition into the private affairs of free British subjects? "Will you choose such committees? Will you submit to them should they be chosen by the weak, foolish, turbulent part of the . . . people? I will not. No. If I must be enslaved, let it be by a KING at least, and not by a parcel of upstart, lawless committeemen."

The Massachusetts men were meanwhile showing no disposition to submit to the King. In that colony a Provincial Congress, organized at Salem in October, 1774, and afterwards removed to Cambridge, had assumed all powers of government in spite of General Gage and contrary to the provisions of the act by which Parliament had presumed to remodel the Massachusetts charter. Outside of Boston at least, the allegiance of the people was freely given to this extra-legal government; and under its direction the towns began to

prepare for defense by organizing the militia and procuring and storing arms and ammunition.

To destroy such stores of ammunition seemed to General Gage quite the most obvious of his duties; and Colonel Smith was accordingly ordered to proceed to the little village of Concord, some eighteen miles northwest of Boston, and destroy the magazines which were known to be collected there. The night of the 18th of April was the time fixed for this expedition; and in the evening of that day patriots in Boston noted with alarm that bodies of troops were moving towards the waterside. Dr. Joseph Warren, knowing or easily guessing the destination of the troops, at once despatched William Dawes, and later in the evening Paul Revere also, to Lexington and Concord to spread the alarm. As the little army of Colonel Smith — a thousand men, more or less — left Boston and marched up into the country, church bells and the booming of cannon announced their coming. Day was breaking when the British troops approached the town of Lexington; and there on the green they could see, in the early morning light, perhaps half a hundred men standing in military array — fifty against a thousand! The British rushed forward with huzzas, in the midst of which shots were

heard; and when the little band of minutemen was dispersed eight of the fifty lay dead upon the village green.

The battle of Lexington was begun, but it was not yet finished. Pushing on to Concord, the thousand disciplined British regulars captured and destroyed the military stores collected there. This was easily done; but the return from Concord to Lexington, and from Lexington to Cambridge, proved a disastrous retreat. The British found indeed no minutemen drawn up in military array to block their path; but they found themselves subject to the deadly fire of men concealed behind the trees and rocks and clumps of shrubs that everywhere conveniently lined the open road. With this method of warfare, not learned in books, the British were unfamiliar. Discipline was but a handicap; and the fifteen hundred soldiers that General Gage sent out to Lexington to rescue Colonel Smith served only to make the disaster greater in the end. When the retreating army finally reached the shelter of Cambridge, it had lost, in killed and wounded, 247 men; while the Americans, of whom it had been confidently asserted in England that they would not stand against British regulars, had lost but 88.

The courier announcing the news of Lexington passed through New York on the 23d of April. Twenty-four hours later, during the height of the excitement occasioned by that event, intelligence arrived from England that Parliament had approved Lord North's Resolution on Conciliation. For extending the olive branch, the time was inauspicious; and when the second Continental Congress assembled, two weeks later, on the 10th of May, men were everywhere wrathfully declaring that the blood shed at Lexington made allegiance to Britain forever impossible.

It might indeed have seemed that the time had come when every man must decide, once for all, whether he would submit unreservedly to the King or stand without question for the defense of America. Yet not all men, not a majority of men in the second Continental Congress, were of that opinion.

The second Congress was filled with moderate minded men who would not believe the time had come when that decision had to be made — men who were bound to sign themselves British-Americans till the last possible moment, many of whom could not now have told whether in the end they would sign themselves Britons or Americans. Surely,

they said, we need not make the decision yet. We have the best of reasons for knowing that Britain will not press matters to extremities. Can we not handle the olive branch and the sword as well as Lord North? A little fighting, to convince ministers that we can't be frightened, and all will be well. We shall have been neither rebels nor slaves. The second Congress was full of men who were, as yet, "Neither-Nor."

There was Joseph Galloway, once more elected to represent Pennsylvania, ready to do what he could to keep Congress from hasty action, hoping for the best yet rather expecting the worst, discreetly retiring, at an early date, within the ranks of the British loyalists. John Alsop, the "soft, sweet" man, was also there, active enough in his mild way until the very last — until the Declaration of Independence, as he said, "closed the last door to reconciliation." There, too, was James Duane, with never so great need of his "surveying eye" to enable him to size up the situation. He is more discreet than any one, and sits quietly in his seat, on those days when he finds it convenient to attend, which is not too often — especially after November, at which time he moved his effects to Duanesborough, and so very soon disappears

from sight, except perhaps vicariously in the person of his servant, James Brattle, whom we see flitting obscurely from Philadelphia to New York conveying secret information to Governor Tryon. John Jay, the hard-reading young lawyer, who favored Mr. Galloway's plan but in the end signed the Association—here he is again, edging his way carefully along, watching his step, crossing no bridges beforehand, well over indeed before he seems aware of any gulf to be crossed. And here is the famous Pennsylvania Farmer, leader of all moderate men, John Dickinson, only too well aware of the gulf opening up before him, fervently praying that it may close again of its own accord. Mr. Dickinson has no mind for anything but conciliation, to obtain which he will go the length of donning a Colonel's uniform, or at least a Colonel's title, perfecting himself and his neighbors in the manual of arms against the day when the King would graciously listen to the loyal and humble petition of the Congress.

Mr. Dickinson, staking all on the petition, was distressed at the rash talk that went on out of doors; and in this respect, no one distressed him more than his old friend, John Adams, who thought and said that a petition was a waste of time and

who was all for the most vigorous measures (such, doubtless, as Demosthenes might have counseled), — the seizure of all crown officers, the formation of state governments, the raising of an army, and negotiations for obtaining the assistance of France. When Mr. Dickinson, having marshaled his followers from the middle colonies and South Carolina, got his petition before the Congress, John Adams, as a matter of course, made “an opposition to it in as long a speech as I commonly made . . . in answer to all the arguments that had been urged.” And Adams relates in his *Diary* how, being shortly called out of Congress Hall, he was followed by Mr. Dickinson, who broke out upon him in great anger. “What is the reason, Mr. Adams, that you New-England men oppose our measures of reconciliation? There now is Sullivan, in a long harangue, following you in a determined opposition to our petition to the King. Look ye! If you don’t concur with us in our pacific system, I and a number of us will break off from you in New England, and we will carry on the opposition by ourselves in our own way.” At that moment it chanced that John Adams was “in a very happy temper” (which was not always the case), and so, he says, was able to reply very



coolly. "Mr. Dickinson, there are many things that I can very cheerfully sacrifice to harmony, and even to unanimity; but I am not to be threatened into an express adoption or approbation of measures which my judgment reprobates. Congress must judge, and if they pronounce against me, I must submit, as, if they determine against you, you ought to acquiesce."

The Congress did decide. It decided to adopt Mr. Dickinson's petition; and to this measure John Adams submitted. But the Congress also decided to raise a Continental army to assist Massachusetts in driving the British forces out of Boston, of which army it appointed, as Commander-in-Chief, George Washington, Esq.; and in justification of these measures it published a *Declaration of the Causes and Necessity of Taking up Arms*:

Our cause is just. Our union is perfect. Our internal resources are great, and, if necessary, foreign assistance is undoubtedly attainable. . . . Fortified with these animating reflections, we . . . declare that . . . the arms we have been compelled by our enemies to assume, we will . . . employ for the preservation of our liberties, being with one mind resolved to die freemen rather than live slaves. . . . We have not raised armies with ambitious designs of separating from Great

Britain. . . . We shall lay them down when hostilities shall cease on the part of the aggressors. . . . With an humble confidence in the mercies of the supreme and impartial Judge and Ruler of the Universe, we . . . implore his divine goodness to protect us happily through this great conflict, to dispose our adversaries to reconciliation on reasonable terms, and thereby to relieve the empire from the calamities of civil war.

In these measures Mr. Dickinson acquiesced, as John Adams had submitted to the petition. The "perfect" union which was thus attained was nevertheless a union of wills rather than of opinions; and on July 24, 1775, in a letter to James Warren, John Adams gave a frank account of the state of mind to which the perfect union had reduced him:

In confidence, I am determined to write freely to you this time. A certain great Fortune and piddling Genius, whose Fame has been trumpeted so loudly, has given a silly Cast to our whole Doings. We are between Hawk and Buzzard. We ought to have had in our Hands a month ago the whole Legislative, executive, and judicial of the whole Continent, and have completely modeled a Constitution; to have raised a naval Power, and opened our Ports wide; to have arrested every Friend of Government on the Continent and held them as Hostages for the poor Victims of Boston, and then opened the Door as wide as possible for Peace and Reconciliation. After that they might

have petitioned, and negotiated, and addressed, etc., if they would. Is all this extravagant? Is it wild? Is it not the soundest Policy?

It seems that Mr. Adams would have presented the sword boldly, keeping the olive branch carefully concealed behind his back. His letter, intercepted by the British Government, and printed about the time when Mr. Dickinson's petition was received in London, did nothing to make the union in America more perfect, or to facilitate the opening of that refractory "Door . . . for Peace and Reconciliation."

The truth is that John Adams no longer believed in the possibility of opening this door, even by the tiniest crack; and even those who still had faith in the petition as a means to that end found it somewhat difficult to keep their faith alive during the weary month of October while they waited for the King's reply. Mr. Chase, although he had "not absolutely discarded every glimpse of a hope of reconciliation," admitted that the prospect was "gloomy." Mr. Zubly assured Congress that he "did hope for a reconciliation and that this winter may bring it"; and he added, as if justifying himself against sceptical shrugs of shoulders, "I may enjoy my hopes for reconciliation; others

may enjoy theirs that none will take place." It might almost seem that the idea of reconciliation, in this October of 1775, was a vanishing image to be enjoyed retrospectively rather than anything substantial to build upon for the future. This it was, perhaps, that gave especial point to Mr. Zubly's oft-repeated assertion that Congress must speedily obtain one of two things — "a reconciliation with Great Britain, or the means of carrying on the war."

Reconciliation *or* war! This was surely a new antithesis. Had not arms been taken up for the purpose precisely of disposing their adversaries "to reconciliation on reasonable terms"? Does Mr. Zubly mean to say then that war is an alternative to reconciliation — an alternative which will lead the colonies away from compromise towards that which all have professed not to desire? Is Mr. Zubly hinting at independence even before the King has replied to the petition? No. This is not what Mr. Zubly meant. What he had in the back of his mind, and what the Congress was coming to have in the back of its mind, if one may judge from the abbreviated notes which John Adams took of the debates in the fall of 1775, was that if the colonies could not obtain reconciliation

by means of the non-intercourse measures very soon — this very winter as Mr. Zubly hoped — they would have to rely for reconciliation upon a vigorous prosecution of the war; in which case the non-intercourse measures were likely to prove an obstacle rather than an advantage, since they would make it difficult, if not impossible, to obtain the “means of carrying on the war.”

The non-intercourse measures had been designed to obtain conciliation by forcing Great Britain to make concessions; but if Great Britain would make no concessions, then the non-intercourse measures, by destroying the trade and prosperity of the colonies, would have no other effect than to bring about conciliation by forcing the colonies to make concessions themselves. This was not the kind of conciliation that any one wanted; and so the real antithesis which now confronted Congress was between war and non-intercourse. Mr. Livingston put the situation clearly when he said: “We are between hawk and buzzard; we puzzle ourselves between the commercial and warlike opposition.”

Through long debates Congress puzzled itself over the difficult task of maintaining the Association and of obtaining the means for carrying on the war. Doubtless a simple way out would be

for Congress to allow so much exportation only as might be necessary to pay for arms and ammunition; and still not so simple either, since it would at once excite many jealousies. "To get powder," Mr. Jay observed, "we keep a secret law that produce may be exported. Then come the wrangles among the people. A vessel is seen loading—a fellow runs to the committee." Well, it could not be helped; let the fellow run to the committee, and let the committee reassure him—that was the business of the committee; and so the Congress authorized the several colonies to export as much "produce, except horned cattle, sheep, hogs, and poultry, as they may deem necessary for the importation of arms, ammunition, sulphur, and saltpetre." Thus powder might be obtained.

Nevertheless, war could not live by powder alone. The imponderable moral factors had to be considered, chief of which was the popular support or opposition which Congress and the army might count upon under certain circumstances. No doubt people were patriotic and wished to maintain their rights; but no doubt people would be more patriotic and more enthusiastic and practically active in their support of both Congress and the army, if they were reasonably prosperous

and contented than if they were not. Self-denying ordinances were, by their very nature, of temporary and limited efficacy; and it was pertinent to inquire how long the people would be content with the total stoppage of trade and the decay of business which was becoming every day more marked. "We can live on acorns; but will we?" It would perhaps be prudent not to expect "more virtue . . . from our people than any people ever had"; it would be prudent "not to put virtue to too severe a test, . . . lest we wear it out." And it might well be asked what would wear it out and "disunite us more than the decay of all business? The people will feel, and will say, that Congress tax them and oppress them more than Parliament." If the people were to be asked to fight for their rights, they must at all hazards not be allowed to say that Congress oppressed them more than Parliament!

For the moment all this was no more than a confession that the Association, originally designed as a finely chiseled stepping-stone to reconciliation, was likely to prove a stumbling-block unless the King graciously extended his royal hand to give a hearty lift. It presently appeared that the King refused to extend his hand. October 31.



1775, information reached America that Richard Penn and Arthur Lee, having presented the petition to Lord Dartmouth, were informed that the King would not receive them, and furthermore that no answer would be returned to the Congress. Ignoring the petition was to exhibit only one degree more of contempt for that carefully prepared document than the Congress had shown for Lord North's Resolution on Conciliation; and now that the olive branch had been spurned on both sides, it was a little difficult to see how either side could possibly refuse the sword.

That the colonies would refuse the sword was not very likely; but, as if to make a refusal impossible, the British Government, on December 22, 1775, decided to thrust the sword into their hands. This at all events was thought by many men to be the effect of the Prohibitory Act, which declared the colonies outside the protection of the Crown, and which, for the purpose of reducing them to submission, laid an embargo upon all their trade and proclaimed their ports in a state of blockade.

I know not [John Adams wrote] whether you have seen the Act of Parliament called the Restraining Act or Prohibitory Act, or Piratical Act, or Act of Independency — for by all these titles is it called. I

think the most apposite is the Act of Independency; the King, Lords, and Commons have united in sundering this country from that, I think, forever. It is a complete dismemberment of the British Empire. It throws thirteen colonies out of the royal protection, and makes us independent in spite of supplications and entreaties. It may be fortunate that the act of Independency should come from the British Parliament rather than from the American Congress; but it is very odd that Americans should hesitate at accepting such a gift from them.

The majority of those who refused to accept it — and the number was large — retired, with saddened hearts for the most part, into the ranks of the British Loyalists; only a few, with John Dickinson at their head, could still visualize the vanishing image of reconciliation. Whether the Prohibitory Act made reconciliation impossible or not, one thing at all events it made clear: if Britain was bent on forcing the colonies to submit by ruining their trade, it could scarcely be good policy for the colonies to help her do it; of which the reasonable conclusion seemed to be that, since the Parliament wished to close the ports of America to the world, Congress would do well to open them to the world. On February 16, 1776, Congress accordingly took into “consideration the propriety of opening the

ports." To declare the ports open to the world was no doubt easily done; but the main thing after all was to carry on trade with the world; and this was not so easy since British naval vessels were there to prevent it. "We can't carry on a beneficial trade, as our enemies will take our ships"; so Mr. Sherman said, and of this he thought the obvious inference was that "a treaty with a foreign power is necessary, before we open our trade, to protect it."

"A treaty with a foreign power" — Mr. Wythe also mentioned this as a possible way of reviving the trade of the colonies; but a treaty with a foreign power was easier conceived of than made, and Mr. Wythe thought "other things are to be considered before we adopt such a measure." In considering these "other things," Mr. Wythe asked and answered the fundamental question: "In what character shall we treat? — as subjects of Great Britain — as rebels? . . . If we should offer our trade to the court of France, would they take notice of it any more than if Bristol or Liverpool should offer theirs, while we profess to be subjects? No. We must declare ourselves a free people." Thus it appeared that the character of British subjects, no less than the Association, was

a stumbling-block in the way of obtaining "the means of carrying on the war." The sword, as an instrument for maintaining rights, could after all not be effectively wielded by America so long as her hand was shackled by even the half-broken ties of a professed allegiance to Britain. Therefore, when the Congress, on the 6th of April, opened the ports of the colonies to the world, the Declaration of Independence was a foregone conclusion.

The idea of independence, for many months past, had hovered like a disembodied hope or menace about the entrance ways of controversy. A few clear-sighted men, such as John Adams and Samuel Seabury, had so long contemplated the idea without blinking that it had taken on familiar form and substance. But the great majority had steadily refused to consider it, except as a possible alternative not needing for the present to be embraced. All these moderate, middle-of-the-way men had now to bring this idea into the focus of attention, for the great illusion that Britain would not push matters to extremities was rapidly dissolving, and the time was come when it was no longer possible for any man to be a British-American and when every man must decide whether it was better to be an American even at the price

of rebellion or a Briton even at the price of submission. It is true that many never made up their minds on this point, being quite content to swear allegiance to whichever cause, according to time or place, happened to be in the ascendant. But of all those thinking men whose minds could be made up to stay, perhaps a third — this is the estimate of John Adams — joined the ranks of the British Loyalists; while the rest, with more or less reluctance, gave their support, little or great, to the cause of independence.

When one has made, with whatever reluctance, an irrevocable decision, it is doubtless well to become adjusted to it as rapidly as possible; and this he can best do by thinking of the decision as a wise one — the only one, in fact, which a sensible person could have made. Thus it was that the idea of independence, embraced by most men with reluctance as a last resort and a necessary evil, rapidly lost, in proportion as it seemed necessary, its character of evil, took on the character of the highest wisdom, and so came to be regarded as a predestined event which all honest patriots must rejoice in having had a hand in bringing about.

This change in the point of view would doubtless have been made in any case; but in rapidly invest-

ing the idea of independence with the shining virtues of an absolute good to be embraced joyously, a great influence must be ascribed to the little pamphlet entitled *Common Sense*, written by a man then known to good patriots as Thomas Paine, and printed in January, 1776. Intrinsically considered, *Common Sense* was indeed no great performance. The matter, thin at best, was neither profoundly nor subtly reasoned; the manner could hardly be described by even the most complacent critic as humane or engaging. Yet *Common Sense* had its brief hour of fame. Its good fortune was to come at the psychological moment; and being everywhere read during the months from January to July, 1776, it was precisely suited to convince men, not so much that they ought to declare independence, as that they ought to declare it gladly, ought to cast off lightly their former false and mawkish affection for the "mother country" and once for all to make an end of backward yearning looks over the shoulder at this burning Sodom.

To a militant patriot like Thomas Paine it was profoundly humiliating to recall that for ten years past Americans had professed themselves "humble and loyal subjects" and "dutiful children,"

yielding to none in "admiration" for the "excellent British Constitution," desiring only to live and die as free citizens under the protecting wing of the mother country. Recalling all this sickening sentimentalism, Mr. Paine uttered a loud and ringing BOSH! Let us clear our minds of cant, he said in effect, and ask ourselves what is the nature of government in general and of the famous British Constitution in particular. Like the Abbé Sieyès, Mr. Paine had completely mastered the science of government, which was in fact extremely simple. Men form societies, he said, to satisfy their wants, and then find that governments have to be established to restrain their wickedness; and therefore, since government is obviously a necessary evil, that government is best which is simplest.

Just consider then this "excellent British Constitution," and say whether it is simple. On the contrary, it is the most complicated, irrational, and ridiculous contrivance ever devised as a government of enlightened men. Its admirers say that this complexity is a virtue, on account of the nice balance of powers between King, Lords, and Commons, which guarantees a kind of liberty through the resulting inertia of the whole. The Lords



check the Commons and the Commons check the King. But how comes it that the King needs to be checked? Can he not be trusted? This is really the secret of the whole business — that Monarchy naturally tends to despotism; so that the complication of the British Constitution is a virtue only because its basic principle is false and vicious. If Americans still accept the doctrine of the Divine Right of Kings, well and good; if not, then in Heaven's name let them cease to bow down in abject admiration of the British Constitution!

And in ceasing to admire the British Constitution, Americans should also, Thomas Paine thought, give up that other fatal error, the superstition that up to the present unhappy moment the colonies had derived great benefits from living under the protecting wing of the mother country. Protection! "We have boasted the protection of Great Britain, without considering that her motive was interest not attachment; and that she did not protect us from our enemies *on our own account*, but from her enemies *on her own account*, from those who have no quarrel with us *on any other account*, and who will always be our enemies *on the same account*." An odd sort of protection that, which served only to entangle the colonies

in the toils of European intrigues and rivalries, and to make enemies of those who would otherwise be friends! "Our duty to mankind at large, as well as to ourselves, instructs us to renounce the alliance: because, any submission to, or dependence upon, Great Britain, tends directly to involve this continent in European wars and quarrels, and set us at variance with nations who would otherwise seek our friendship and against whom we have neither anger nor complaint."

What foolishness then to seek reconciliation, even if it were possible! Reconciliation at this stage would be the ruin of America. If King George were indeed clever, he would eagerly repeal all the obnoxious acts and make every concession; for when the colonies had once become reconciled he could accomplish by "craft and subtlety, in the long run, what he cannot do by force and violence in the short one." The colonies, having come to maturity, cannot always remain subject to tutelage; like the youth who has reached his majority, they must sooner or later go their own way. Why not now? Beware of reconciliation and of all those who advocate it, for they are either "interested men, who are not to be trusted, weak men who cannot see, prejudiced men who will

not see, or a certain set of moderate men who think better of the European world than it deserves.”

Such arguments were indeed precisely suited to convince men that independence, so far from being an event in which they had become entangled by the fatal network of circumstance, was an event which they freely willed. “Read by almost every American, and recommended as a work replete with truth, against which none but the partial and prejudiced can form any objection, . . . it satisfied multitudes that it is their true interest immediately to cut the Gordian knot by which the . . . colonists have been bound to Great Britain, and to open their commerce, as an independent people, to all the nations of the world.” In April and May, after the Congress had opened the ports, the tide set strongly and irresistibly in the direction of the formal declaration. “Every post and every day rolls in upon us,” John Adams said, “Independence like a torrent.” It was on the 7th of June that Richard Henry Lee, in behalf of the Virginia delegation and in obedience to the instructions from the Virginia Convention, moved “that these United Colonies are, and of right ought to be, free and independent States . . . ; that it is expedient forthwith to take the most

effectual measures for forming foreign Alliances; . . . and that a plan of confederation be prepared and transmitted to the respective Colonies for their consideration and approbation."

The "resolution respecting independency," debated at length, was postponed till the 1st of July, when it was again brought up for consideration. It was still, on that day, opposed by many, chiefly by John Dickinson, who now said that he should not be against independence ultimately, but that he could not consent to it at the present moment because it would serve to divide rather than to unite the colonies. At the close of the debate on the 1st of July, there seemed little prospect of carrying the resolution by a unanimous vote. The Delaware deputies were evenly divided, the third member, Cæsar Rodney, not being at the moment in Philadelphia; the Pennsylvania deputies were opposed to the resolution, three against two; while the New York and South Carolina deputies were not in a position to vote at all, having, as they said, no instructions. The final vote was therefore again postponed until the following day.

Which of the deputies slept this night is not known. But it is known that Cæsar Rodney, hastily summoned, mounted his horse and rode

post-haste to Philadelphia, arriving in time to cast the vote of Delaware in favor of independence; it is known that John Dickinson and Robert Morris remained away from Independence Hall, and that James Wilson changed his mind and voted with Franklin and Morton; and it is known that the South Carolina deputies came somehow to the conclusion, over night, that their instructions were after all sufficient. Thus it was that on July 2, 1776, twelve colonies voted that "these United Colonies are, and of right ought to be, Free and Independent States." One week later, the New York deputies, having been properly instructed, cast the vote of their colony for the resolution also.

Meanwhile, a committee had been appointed to prepare a formal declaration, setting forth the circumstances and the motives which might justify them, in the judgment of mankind, in taking this momentous step. The committee had many meetings to discuss the matter, and, when the main points had been agreed upon, John Adams and Thomas Jefferson were instructed to "draw them up in form, and clothe them in a proper dress." Many years afterwards, in 1822, John Adams related, as accurately as he could,

the conversation which took place when these two met to perform the task assigned them. "Jefferson proposed to me to make the draught. I said, 'I will not.' 'You should do it.' 'Oh! no.' 'Why will you not? You ought to do it.' 'I will not.' 'Why?' 'Reasons enough.' 'What can be your reasons?' 'Reason first — You are a Virginian, and a Virginian ought to appear at the head of this business. Reason second — I am obnoxious, suspected, and unpopular. You are very much otherwise. Reason third — You can write ten times better than I can.' 'Well,' said Jefferson, 'if you are decided, I will do as well as I can.'" In some such manner as this it came about that Thomas Jefferson wrote the Declaration of Independence, no doubt doing, as he said, the best he could.

It is the judgment of posterity that Mr. Jefferson did very well — which was doubtless due partly to the fact that he could write, if not ten times better, at least better than John Adams. Yet the happy phrasing of a brief paragraph or two could scarcely by itself have won so much fame for the author; and perhaps much of the success of this famous paper came from the circumstance that ten years of controversy over the question of political rights had forced Americans to abandon, step by step,

the restricted ground of the positive and prescriptive rights of Englishmen and to take their stand on the broader ground of the natural and inherent rights of man. To have said, "We hold this truth to be self-evident: that all Englishmen are endowed by the British Constitution with the customary right of taxing themselves internally" would probably have made no great impression on the sophisticated European mind. It was Thomas Jefferson's good fortune, in voicing the prevailing sentiment in America, to give classic expression to those fundamental principles of a political faith which was destined, in the course of a hundred years, to win the allegiance of the greater part of the western world.

"We hold these truths to be self-evident: that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these, are Life, Liberty, and the pursuit of Happiness. That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just Powers from the consent of the governed. That, whenever any form of Government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the Right of the People to alter or to abolish it, and to institute new Government, laying its foundation on such



Principles and organizing its Powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their Safety and Happiness."

It is to these principles — for a generation somewhat obscured, it must be confessed, by the Shining Sword and the Almighty Dollar, by the lengthening shadow of Imperialism and the soporific haze of Historic Rights and the Survival of the Fittest — it is to these principles, these "glittering generalities," that the minds of men are turning again in this day of desolation as a refuge from the cult of efficiency and from faith in "that which is just by the judgment of experience."

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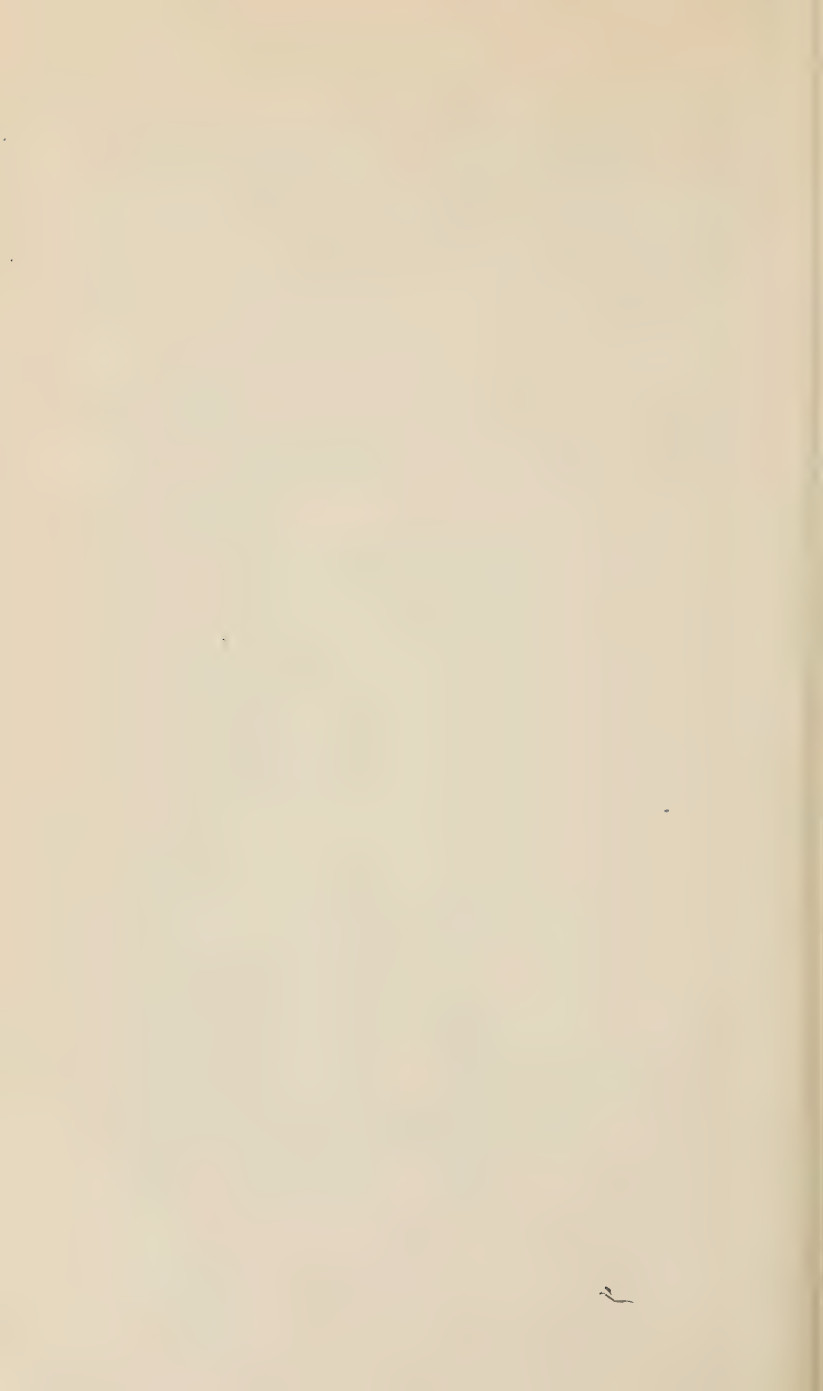
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PART II  
WASHINGTON AND HIS COMRADES  
IN ARMS

A CHRONICLE  
OF THE WAR OF INDEPENDENCE  
BY  
GEORGE M. WRONG



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## PREFATORY NOTE

THE author is aware of a certain audacity in undertaking, himself a Briton, to appear in a company of American writers on American history and above all to write on the subject of Washington. If excuse is needed it is to be found in the special interest of the career of Washington to a citizen of the British Commonwealth of Nations at the present time and in the urgency with which the editor and publishers declared that such an interpretation would not be unwelcome to Americans and pressed upon the author a task for which he doubted his own qualifications. To the editor he owes thanks for wise criticism. He is also indebted to Mr. Worthington C. Ford, Secretary of the Massachusetts Historical Society, a great authority on Washington, who has kindly read the proofs and given helpful comments. Needless to say the author alone is responsible for opinions in the book.

UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO,  
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# WASHINGTON AND HIS COMRADES IN ARMS

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## CHAPTER I

### THE COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF

MOVING among the members of the second Continental Congress, which met at Philadelphia in May, 1775, was one, and but one, military figure. George Washington alone attended the sittings in uniform. This colonel from Virginia, now in his forty-fourth year, was a great landholder, an owner of slaves, an Anglican churchman, an aristocrat, everything that stands in contrast with the type of a revolutionary radical. Yet from the first he had been an outspoken and uncompromising champion of the colonial cause. When the tax was imposed on tea he had abolished the use of tea in his own household and when war was imminent he had talked of recruiting a thousand men at his own

expense and marching to Boston. His steady wearing of the uniform seemed, indeed, to show that he regarded the issue as hardly less military than political.

The clash at Lexington, on the 19th of April, had made vivid the reality of war. Passions ran high. For years there had been tension, long disputes about buying British stamps to put on American legal papers, about duties on glass and paint and paper and, above all, tea. Boston had shown turbulent defiance, and to hold Boston down British soldiers had been quartered on the inhabitants in the proportion of one soldier for five of the populace, a great and annoying burden. And now British soldiers had killed Americans who stood barring their way on Lexington Green. Even calm Benjamin Franklin spoke later of the hands of British ministers as "red, wet, and dropping with blood." Americans never forgot the fresh graves made on that day. There were, it is true, more British than American graves, but the British were regarded as the aggressors. If the rest of the colonies were to join in the struggle, they must have a common leader. Who should he be?

In June, while the Continental Congress faced this question at Philadelphia, events at Boston



made the need of a leader more urgent. Boston was besieged by American volunteers under the command of General Artemas Ward. The siege had lasted for two months, each side watching the other at long range. General Gage, the British Commander, had the sea open to him and a finely tempered army upon which he could rely. The opposite was true of his opponents. They were a motley host rather than an army. They had few guns and almost no powder. Idle waiting since the fight at Lexington made untrained troops restless and anxious to go home. Nothing holds an army together like real war, and shrewd officers knew that they must give the men some hard task to keep up their fighting spirit. It was rumored that Gage was preparing an aggressive movement from Boston, which might mean pillage and massacre in the surrounding country, and it was decided to draw in closer to Boston to give Gage a diversion and prove the mettle of the patriot army. So, on the evening of June 16, 1775, there was a stir of preparation in the American camp at Cambridge, and late at night the men fell in near Harvard College.

Across the Charles River north from Boston, on a peninsula, lay the village of Charlestown, and

rising behind it was Breed's Hill, about seventy-four feet high, extending northeastward to the higher elevation of Bunker Hill. The peninsula could be reached from Cambridge only by a narrow neck of land easily swept by British floating batteries lying off the shore. In the dark the American force of twelve hundred men under Colonel Prescott marched to this neck of land and then advanced half a mile southward to Breed's Hill. Prescott was an old campaigner of the Seven Years' War; he had six cannon, and his troops were commanded by experienced officers. Israel Putnam was skillful in irregular frontier fighting, and Nathanael Greene, destined to prove himself the best man in the American army next to Washington himself, could furnish sage military counsel derived from much thought and reading.

Thus it happened that on the morning of the 17th of June General Gage in Boston awoke to a surprise. He had refused to believe that he was shut up in Boston. It suited his convenience to stay there until a plan of campaign should be evolved by his superiors in London, but he was certain that when he liked he could, with his disciplined battalions, brush away the besieging army. Now he saw the American force on Breed's Hill

throwing up a defiant and menacing redoubt and entrenchments. Gage did not hesitate. The bold aggressors must be driven away at once. He detailed for the enterprise William Howe, the officer destined soon to be his successor in the command at Boston. Howe was a brave and experienced soldier. He had been a friend of Wolfe and had led the party of twenty-four men who had first climbed the cliff at Quebec on the great day when Wolfe fell victorious. He was the younger brother of that beloved Lord Howe who had fallen at Ticonderoga and to whose memory Massachusetts had reared a monument in Westminster Abbey. Gage gave him in all some twenty-five hundred men, and, at about two in the afternoon, this force was landed at Charlestown.

The little town was soon aflame and the smoke helped to conceal Howe's movements. The day was boiling hot and the soldiers carried heavy packs with food for three days, for they intended to camp on Bunker Hill. Straight up Breed's Hill they marched wading through long grass sometimes to their knees and throwing down the fences on the hillside. The British knew that raw troops were likely to scatter their fire on a foe still out of range and they counted on a rapid bayonet charge

against men helpless with empty rifles. This expectation was disappointed. The Americans had in front of them a barricade and Israel Putnam was there, threatening dire things to any one who should fire before he could see the whites of the eyes of the advancing soldiery. As the British came on there was a terrific discharge of musketry at twenty yards, repeated again and again as they either halted or drew back.

The slaughter was terrible. British officers hardened in war declared long afterward that they had never seen carnage like that of this fight. The American riflemen had been told to aim especially at the British officers, easily known by their uniforms, and one rifleman is said to have shot twenty officers before he was himself killed. Lord Rawdon, who played a considerable part in the war and was later, as Marquis of Hastings, Viceroy of India, used to tell of his terror as he fought in the British line. Suddenly a soldier was shot dead by his side, and, when he saw the man quiet at his feet, he said, "Is Death nothing but this?" and henceforth had no fear. When the first attack by the British was checked they retired; but, with dogged resolve, they re-formed and again charged up the hill, only a second time to be repulsed. The third time they

were more cautious. They began to work round to the weaker defenses of the American left, where there were no redoubts and entrenchments like those on the right. By this time British ships were throwing shells among the Americans. Charlestown was burning. The great column of black smoke, the incessant roar of cannon, and the dreadful scenes of carnage had affected the defenders. They wavered; and on the third British charge, having exhausted their ammunition, they fled from the hill in confusion back to the narrow neck of land half a mile away, swept now by a British floating battery. General Burgoyne wrote that, in the third attack, the discipline and courage of the British private soldiers also broke down and that when the redoubt was carried the officers of some corps were almost alone. The British stood victorious at Bunker Hill. It was, however, a costly victory. More than a thousand men, nearly half of the attacking force, had fallen, with an undue proportion of officers.

Philadelphia, far away, did not know what was happening when, two days before the battle of Bunker Hill, the Continental Congress settled the question of a leader for a national army. On the

15th of June John Adams of Massachusetts rose and moved that the Congress should adopt as its own the army before Boston and that it should name Washington as Commander-in-Chief. Adams had deeply pondered the problem. He was certain that New England would remain united and decided in the struggle, but he was not so sure of the other colonies. To have a leader from beyond New England would make for continental unity. Virginia, next to Massachusetts, had stood in the forefront of the movement, and Virginia was fortunate in having in the Congress one whose fame as a soldier ran through all the colonies. There was something to be said for choosing a commander from the colony which began the struggle and Adams knew that his colleague from Massachusetts, John Hancock, a man of wealth and importance, desired the post. He was conspicuous enough to be President of the Congress. Adams says that when he made his motion, naming a Virginian, he saw in Hancock's face "mortification and resentment." He saw, too, that Washington hurriedly left the room when his name was mentioned.

There could be no doubt as to what the Congress would do. Unquestionably Washington was the fittest man for the post. Twenty years earlier he

had seen important service in the war with France. His position and character commanded universal respect. The Congress adopted unanimously the motion of Adams and it only remained to be seen whether Washington would accept. On the next day he came to the sitting with his mind made up. The members, he said, would bear witness to his declaration that he thought himself unfit for the task. Since, however, they called him, he would try to do his duty. He would take the command but he would accept no pay beyond his expenses. Thus it was that Washington became a great national figure. The man who had long worn the King's uniform was now his deadliest enemy; and it is probably true that after this step nothing could have restored the old relations and reunited the British Empire. The broken vessel could not be made whole.

Washington spent only a few days in getting ready to take over his new command. On the 21st of June, four days after Bunker Hill, he set out from Philadelphia. The colonies were in truth very remote from each other. The journey to Boston was tedious. In the previous year John Adams had traveled in the other direction to the Congress at Philadelphia and, in his journal, he notes, as if he



## 10 WASHINGTON AND HIS COMRADES

were traveling in foreign lands, the strange manners and customs of the other colonies. The journey, so momentous to Adams, was not new to Washington. Some twenty years earlier the young Virginian officer had traveled as far as Boston in the service of King George II. Now he was leader in the war against King George III. In New Jersey, New York, and Connecticut he was received impressively. In the warm summer weather the roads were good enough but many of the rivers were not bridged and could be crossed only by ferries or at fords. It took nearly a fortnight to reach Boston.

Washington had ridden only twenty miles on his long journey when the news reached him of the fight at Bunker Hill. The question which he asked anxiously shows what was in his mind: "Did the militia fight?" When the answer was "Yes," he said with relief, "The liberties of the country are safe." He reached Cambridge on the 2d of July and on the following day was the chief figure in a striking ceremony. In the presence of a vast crowd and of the motley army of volunteers, which was now to be called the American army, Washington assumed the command. He sat on horseback under an elm tree and an observer noted that his

appearance was "truly noble and majestic." This was milder praise than that given a little later by a London paper which said: "There is not a king in Europe but would look like a *valet de chambre* by his side." New England having seen him was henceforth wholly on his side. His traditions were not those of the Puritans, of the Ephraims and the Abijahs of the volunteer army, men whose Old Testament names tell something of the rigor of the Puritan view of life. Washington, a sharer in the free and often careless hospitality of his native Virginia, had a different outlook. In his personal discipline, however, he was not less Puritan than the strictest of New Englanders. The coming years were to show that a great leader had taken his fitting place.

Washington, born in 1732, had been trained in self-reliance, for he had been fatherless from childhood. At the age of sixteen he was working at the profession, largely self-taught, of a surveyor of land. At the age of twenty-seven he married Martha Custis, a rich widow with children, though her marriage with Washington was childless. His estate on the Potomac River, three hundred miles from the open sea, recently named Mount Vernon,

had been in the family for nearly a hundred years. There were twenty-five hundred acres at Mount Vernon with ten miles of frontage on the tidal river. The Virginia planters were a landowning gentry; when Washington died he had more than sixty thousand acres. The growing of tobacco, the one vital industry of the Virginia of the time, with its half million people, was connected with the ownership of land. On their great estates the planters lived remote, with a mail perhaps every fortnight. There were no large towns, no great factories. Nearly half of the population consisted of negro slaves. It is one of the ironies of history that the chief leader in a war marked by a passion for liberty was a member of a society in which, as another of its members, Jefferson, the author of the Declaration of Independence, said, there was on the one hand the most insulting despotism and on the other the most degrading submission. The Virginian landowners were more absolute masters than the proudest lords of medieval England. These feudal lords had serfs on their land. The serfs were attached to the soil and were sold to a new master with the soil. They were not, however, property, without human rights. On the other hand, the slaves of the Virginian master were property like

his horses. They could not even call wife and children their own, for these might be sold at will. It arouses a strange emotion now when we find Washington offering to exchange a negro for hogs-heads of molasses and rum and writing that the man would bring a good price, "if kept clean and trim'd up a little when offered for sale."

In early life Washington had had very little of formal education. He knew no language but English. When he became world famous and his friend La Fayette urged him to visit France he refused because he would seem uncouth if unable to speak the French tongue. Like another great soldier, the Duke of Wellington, he was always careful about his dress. There was in him a silent pride which would brook nothing derogatory to his dignity. No one could be more methodical. He kept his accounts rigorously, entering even the cost of repairing a hairpin for a ward. He was a keen farmer, and it is amusing to find him recording in his careful journal that there are 844,800 seeds of "New River Grass" to the pound Troy and so determining how many should be sown to the acre. Not many youths would write out as did Washington, apparently from French sources, and read and reread elaborate "Rules of Civility and Decent

Behaviour in Company and Conversation.” In the fashion of the age of Chesterfield they portray the perfect gentleman. He is always to remember the presence of others and not to move, read, or speak without considering what may be due to them. In the true spirit of the time he is to learn to defer to persons of superior quality. Tactless laughter at his own wit, jests that have a sting of idle gossip, are to be avoided. Reproof is to be given not in anger but in a sweet and mild temper. The rules descend even to manners at table and are a revelation of care in self-discipline. We might imagine Oliver Cromwell drawing up such rules, but not Napoleon or Wellington.

The class to which Washington belonged prided itself on good birth and good breeding. We picture him as austere, but, like Oliver Cromwell, whom in some respects he resembles, he was very human in his personal relations. He liked a glass of wine. He was fond of dancing and he went to the theater, even on Sunday. He was, too, something of a lady’s man; “He can be downright impudent sometimes,” wrote a Southern lady, “such impudence, Fanny, as you and I like.” In old age he loved to have the young and gay about him. He could break into furious oaths and no one was a better

master of what we may call honorable guile in dealing with wily savages, in circulating falsehoods that would deceive the enemy in time of war, or in pursuing a business advantage. He played cards for money and carefully entered loss and gain in his accounts. He loved horseracing and horses, and nothing pleased him more than to talk of that noble animal. He kept hounds and until his burden of cares became too great was an eager devotee of hunting. His shooting was of a type more heroic than that of an English squire spending a day on a moor with guests and gamekeepers and returning to comfort in the evening. Washington went off on expeditions into the forest lasting many days and shared the life in the woods of rough men, sleeping often in the open air. "Happy," he wrote, "is he who gets the berth nearest the fire." He could spend a happy day in admiring the trees and the richness of the land on a neighbor's estate. Always his thoughts were turning to the soil. There was poetry in him. It was said of Napoleon that the one approach to poetry in all his writings is the phrase: "The spring is at last appearing and the leaves are beginning to sprout." Washington, on the other hand, brooded over the mysteries of life. He pictured to himself the serenity of a calm

old age and always dared to look death squarely in the face. He was sensitive to human passion and he felt the wonder of nature in all her ways, her bounteous response in growth to the skill of man, the delight of improving the earth in contrast with the vain glory gained by ravaging it in war. His most striking characteristics were energy and decision united often with strong likes and dislikes. His clever secretary, Alexander Hamilton, found, as he said, that his chief was not remarkable for good temper and resigned his post because of an impatient rebuke. When a young man serving in the army of Virginia, Washington had many a tussle with the obstinate Scottish Governor, Dinwiddie, who thought his vehemence unmannerly and ungrateful. Gilbert Stuart, who painted several of his portraits, said that his features showed strong passions and that, had he not learned self-restraint, his temper would have been savage. This discipline he acquired. The task was not easy, but in time he was able to say with truth, "I have no resentments," and his self-control became so perfect as to be almost uncanny.

The assumption that Washington fought against an England grown decadent is not justified. To admit this would be to make his task seem lighter



than it really was. No doubt many of the rich aristocracy spent idle days of pleasure-seeking with the comfortable conviction that they could discharge their duties to society by merely existing, since their luxury made work and the more they indulged themselves the more happy and profitable employment would their many dependents enjoy. The eighteenth century was, however, a wonderful epoch in England. Agriculture became a new thing under the leadership of great landowners like Lord Townshend and Coke of Norfolk. Already was abroad in society a divine discontent at existing abuses. It brought Warren Hastings to trial on the charge of plundering India. It attacked slavery, the cruelty of the criminal law, which sent children to execution for the theft of a few pennies, the brutality of the prisons, the torpid indifference of the church to the needs of the masses. New inventions were beginning the age of machinery. The reform of Parliament, votes for the toiling masses, and a thousand other improvements were being urged. It was a vigorous, rich, and arrogant England which Washington confronted.

It is sometimes said of Washington that he was an English country gentleman. A gentleman he was, but with an experience and training quite

unlike that of a gentleman in England. The young heir to an English estate might or might not go to a university. He could, like the young Charles James Fox, become a scholar, but like Fox, who knew some of the virtues and all the supposed gentlemanly vices, he might dissipate his energies in hunting, gambling, and cockfighting. He would almost certainly make the grand tour of Europe, and, if he had little Latin and less Greek, he was pretty certain to have some familiarity with Paris and a smattering of French. The eighteenth century was a period of magnificent living in England. The great landowner, then, as now, the magnate of his neighborhood, was likely to rear, if he did not inherit, one of those vast palaces which are today burdens so costly to the heirs of their builders. At the beginning of the century the nation to honor Marlborough for his victories could think of nothing better than to give him half a million pounds to build a palace. Even with the colossal wealth produced by modern industry we should be staggered at a residence costing millions of dollars. Yet the Duke of Devonshire rivaled at Chatsworth, and Lord Leicester at Holkham, Marlborough's building at Blenheim, and many other costly palaces were erected during the following

half century. Their owners sometimes built in order to surpass a neighbor in grandeur, and to this day great estates are encumbered by the debts thus incurred in vain show. The heir to such a property was reared in a pomp and luxury undreamed of by the frugal young planter of Virginia. Of working for a livelihood, in the sense in which Washington knew it, the young Englishman of great estate would never dream.

The Atlantic is a broad sea and even in our own day, when instant messages flash across it and man himself can fly from shore to shore in less than a score of hours, it is not easy for those on one strand to understand the thought of those on the other. Every community evolves its own spirit not easily to be apprehended by the onlooker. The state of society in America was vitally different from that in England. The plain living of Virginia was in sharp contrast with the magnificence and ease of England. It is true that we hear of plate and elaborate furniture, of servants in livery, and much drinking of Port and Madeira, among the Virginians. They had good horses. Driving, as often they did, with six in a carriage, they seemed to keep up regal style. Spaces were wide in a country where one great landowner, Lord Fairfax, held

no less than five million acres. Houses lay isolated and remote and a gentleman dining out would sometimes drive his elaborate equipage from twenty to fifty miles. There was a tradition of lavish hospitality, of gallant men and fair women, and sometimes of hard and riotous living. Many of the houses were, however, in a state of decay, with leaking roofs, battered doors and windows and shabby furniture. To own land in Virginia did not mean to live in luxurious ease. Land brought in truth no very large income. It was easier to break new land than to fertilize that long in use. An acre yielded only eight or ten bushels of wheat. In England the land was more fruitful. One who was only a tenant on the estate of Coke of Norfolk died worth £150,000, and Coke himself had the income of a prince. When Washington died he was reputed one of the richest men in America and yet his estate was hardly equal to that of Coke's tenant.

Washington was a good farmer, inventive and enterprising, but he had difficulties which ruined many of his neighbors. Today much of his infertile estate of Mount Vernon would hardly grow enough to pay the taxes. When Washington desired a gardener, or a bricklayer, or a carpenter,

he usually had to buy him in the form of a convict, or of a negro slave, or of a white man indentured for a term of years. Such labor required eternal vigilance. The negro, himself property, had no respect for it in others. He stole when he could and worked only when the eyes of a master were upon him. If left in charge of plants or of stock he was likely to let them perish for lack of water. Washington's losses of cattle, horses, and sheep from this cause were enormous. The neglected cattle gave so little milk that at one time Washington, with a hundred cows, had to buy his butter. Negroes feigned sickness for weeks at a time. A visitor noted that Washington spoke to his slaves with a stern harshness. No doubt it was necessary. The management of this intractable material brought training in command. If Washington could make negroes efficient and farming pay in Virginia, he need hardly be afraid to meet any other type of difficulty.

From the first he was satisfied that the colonies had before them a difficult struggle. Many still refused to believe that there was really a state of war. Lexington and Bunker Hill might be regarded as unfortunate accidents to be explained away in an era of good feeling when each side

should acknowledge the merits of the other and apologize for its own faults. Washington had few illusions of this kind. He took the issue in a serious and even bitter spirit. He knew nothing of the Englishman at home for he had never set foot outside of the colonies except to visit Barbados with an invalid half-brother. Even then he noted that the "gentleman inhabitants" whose "hospitality and genteel behaviour" he admired were discontented with the tone of the officials sent out from England. From early life Washington had seen much of British officers in America. Some of them had been men of high birth and station who treated the young colonial officer with due courtesy. When, however, he had served on the staff of the unfortunate General Braddock in the calamitous campaign of 1755, he had been offended by the tone of that leader. Probably it was in these days that Washington first brooded over the contrasts between the Englishman and the Virginian. With obstinate complacency Braddock had disregarded Washington's counsels of prudence. He showed arrogant confidence in his veteran troops and contempt for the amateur soldiers of whom Washington was one. In a wild country where rapid movement was the condition of success Braddock would

halt, as Washington said, "to level every mole hill and to erect bridges over every brook." His transport was poor and Washington, a lover of horses, chafed at what he called "vile management" of the horses by the British soldier. When anything went wrong Braddock blamed, not the ineffective work of his own men, but the supineness of Virginia. "He looks upon the country," Washington wrote in wrath, "I believe, as void of honour and honesty." The hour of trial came in the fight of July, 1755, when Braddock was defeated and killed on the march to the Ohio. Washington told his mother that in the fight the Virginian troops stood their ground and were nearly all killed but the boasted regulars "were struck with such a panic that they behaved with more cowardice than it is possible to conceive." In the anger and resentment of this comment is found the spirit which made Washington a champion of the colonial cause from the first hour of disagreement.

That was a fatal day in March, 1765, when the British Parliament voted that it was just and necessary that a revenue be raised in America. Washington was uncompromising. After the tax on tea he derided "our lordly masters in Great Britain." No man, he said, should scruple for a



moment to take up arms against the threatened tyranny. He and his neighbors of Fairfax County, Virginia, took the trouble to tell the world by formal resolution on July 18, 1774, that they were descended not from a conquered but from a conquering people, that they claimed full equality with the people of Great Britain, and like them would make their own laws and impose their own taxes. They were not democrats; they had no theories of equality; but as "gentlemen and men of fortune" they would show to others the right path in the crisis which had arisen. In this resolution spoke the proud spirit of Washington; and, as he brooded over what was happening, anger fortified his pride. Of the Tories in Boston, some of them highly educated men, who with sorrow were walking in what was to them the hard path of duty, Washington could say later that "there never existed a more miserable set of beings than these wretched creatures."

The age of Washington was one of bitter vehemence in political thought. In England the good Whig was taught that to deny Whig doctrine was blasphemy, that there was no truth or honesty on the other side, and that no one should trust a Tory; and usually the good Whig was true to the teaching

he had received. In America there had hitherto been no national politics. Issues had been local and passions thus confined exploded all the more fiercely. Franklin spoke of George III as drinking long draughts of American blood and of the British people as so depraved and barbarous as to be the wickedest nation upon earth, inspired by bloody and insatiable malice and wickedness. To Washington George III was a tyrant, his ministers were scoundrels, and the British people were lost to every sense of virtue. The evil of it is that, for a posterity which listened to no other comment on the issues of the Revolution, such utterances, instead of being understood as passing expressions of party bitterness, were taken as the calm judgments of men held in reverence and awe. Posterity has agreed that there is nothing to be said for the coercing of the colonies so resolutely pressed by George III and his ministers. Posterity can also, however, understand that the struggle was not between undiluted virtue on the one side and undiluted vice on the other. Some eighty years after the American Revolution the Republic created by the Revolution endured the horrors of civil war rather than accept its own disruption. In 1776 even the most liberal Englishmen felt a similar passion for

the continued unity of the British Empire. Time has reconciled all schools of thought to the unity lost in the case of the Empire and to the unity preserved in the case of the Republic, but on the losing side in each case good men fought with deep conviction.

## CHAPTER II

### BOSTON AND QUEBEC

WASHINGTON was not a professional soldier, though he had seen the realities of war and had moved in military society. Perhaps it was an advantage that he had not received the rigid training of a regular, for he faced conditions which required an elastic mind. The force besieging Boston consisted at first chiefly of New England militia, with companies of minute-men, so called because of their supposed readiness to fight at a minute's notice. Washington had been told that he should find 20,000 men under his command; he found, in fact, a nominal army of 17,000, with probably not more than 14,000 effective, and the number tended to decline as the men went away to their homes after the first vivid interest gave way to the humdrum of military life.

The extensive camp before Boston, as Washington now saw it, expressed the varied character

of his strange command. Cambridge, the seat of Harvard College, was still only a village with a few large houses and park-like grounds set among fields of grain, now trodden down by the soldiers. Here was placed in haphazard style the motley housing of a military camp. The occupants had followed their own taste in building. One could see structures covered with turf, looking like lumps of mother earth, tents made of sail cloth, huts of bare boards, huts of brick and stone, some having doors and windows of wattled basketwork. There were not enough huts to house the army nor camp-kettles for cooking. Blankets were so few that many of the men were without covering at night. In the warm summer weather this did not much matter but bleak autumn and harsh winter would bring bitter privation. The sick in particular suffered severely, for the hospitals were badly equipped.

A deep conviction inspired many of the volunteers. They regarded as brutal tyranny the tax on tea, considered in England as a mild expedient for raising needed revenue for defense in the colonies. The men of Suffolk County, Massachusetts, meeting in September, 1774, had declared in high-flown terms that the proposed tax came from a

parricide who held a dagger at their bosoms and that those who resisted him would earn praises to eternity. From nearly every colony came similar utterances, and flaming resentment at injustice filled the volunteer army. Many a soldier would not touch a cup of tea because tea had been the ruin of his country. Some wore pinned to their hats or coats the words "Liberty or Death" and talked of resisting tyranny until "time shall be no more." It was a dark day for the motherland when so many of her sons believed that she was the enemy of liberty. The iron of this conviction entered into the soul of the American nation; at Gettysburg, nearly a century later, Abraham Lincoln, in a noble utterance which touched the heart of humanity, could appeal to the days of the Revolution, when "our fathers brought forth on this continent a new nation, conceived in liberty." The colonists believed that they were fighting for something of import to all mankind, and the nation which they created believes it still.

An age of war furnishes, however, occasion for the exercise of baser impulses. The New Englander was a trader by instinct. An army had come suddenly together and there was golden promise of contracts for supplies at fat profits.

The leader from Virginia, untutored in such things, was astounded at the greedy scramble. Before the year 1775 ended Washington wrote to his friend Lee that he prayed God he might never again have to witness such lack of public spirit, such jobbing and self-seeking, such "fertility in all the low arts," as now he found at Cambridge. He declared that if he could have foreseen all this nothing would have induced him to take the command. Later, the young La Fayette, who had left behind him in France wealth and luxury in order to fight a hard fight in America, was shocked at the slackness and indifference among the supposed patriots for whose cause he was making sacrifices so heavy. In the backward parts of the colonies the population was densely ignorant and had little grasp of the deeper meaning of the patriot cause.

The army was, as Washington himself said, "a mixed multitude." There was every variety of dress. Old uniforms, treasured from the days of the last French wars, had been dug out. A military coat or a cocked hat was the only semblance of uniform possessed by some of the officers. Rank was often indicated by ribbons of different colors tied on the arm. Lads from the farms had come in their usual dress; a good many of these were



hunters from the frontier wearing the buckskin of the deer they had slain. Sometimes there was clothing of grimmer material. Later in the war an American officer recorded that his men had skinned two dead Indians "from their hips down, for bootlegs, one pair for the Major, the other for myself." The volunteers varied greatly in age. There were bearded veterans of sixty and a sprinkling of lads of sixteen. An observer laughed at the boys and the "great great grandfathers" who marched side by side in the army before Boston. Occasionally a black face was seen in the ranks. One of Washington's tasks was to reduce the disparity of years and especially to secure men who could shoot. In the first enthusiasm of 1775 so many men volunteered in Virginia that a selection was made on the basis of accuracy in shooting. The men fired at a range of one hundred and fifty yards at an outline of a man's nose in chalk on a board. Each man had a single shot and the first men shot the nose entirely away.

Undoubtedly there was the finest material among the men lounging about their quarters at Cambridge in fashion so unmilitary. In physique they were larger than the British soldier, a result due to abundant food and free life in the open air

from childhood. Most of the men supplied their own uniform and rifles and much barter went on in the hours after drill. The men made and sold shoes, clothes, and even arms. They were accustomed to farm life and good at digging and throwing up entrenchments. The colonial mode of waging war was, however, not that of Europe. To the regular soldier of the time even earth entrenchments seemed a sign of cowardice. The brave man would come out on the open to face his foe. Earl Percy, who rescued the harassed British on the day of Lexington, had the poorest possible opinion of those on what he called the rebel side. To him they were intriguing rascals, hypocrites, cowards, with sinister designs to ruin the Empire. But he was forced to admit that they fought well and faced death willingly.

In time Washington gathered about him a fine body of officers, brave, steady, and efficient. On the great issue they, like himself, had unchanging conviction, and they and he saved the revolution. But a good many of his difficulties were due to bad officers. He had himself the reverence for gentility, the belief in an ordered grading of society, characteristic of his class in that age. In Virginia the relation of master and servant was

well understood and the tone of authority was readily accepted. In New England conceptions of equality were more advanced. The extent to which the people would brook the despotism of military command was uncertain. From the first some of the volunteers had elected their officers. The result was that intriguing demagogues were sometimes chosen. The Massachusetts troops, wrote a Connecticut captain, not free, perhaps, from local jealousy, were "commanded by a most despicable set of officers." At Bunker Hill officers of this type shirked the fight and their men, left without leaders, joined in the panicky retreat of that day. Other officers sent away soldiers to work on their farms while at the same time they drew for them public pay. At a later time Washington wrote to a friend wise counsel about the choice of officers. "Take none but gentlemen; let no local attachment influence you; do not suffer your good nature to say Yes when you ought to say No. Remember that it is a public, not a private cause." What he desired was the gentleman's chivalry of refinement, sense of honor, dignity of character, and freedom from mere self-seeking. The prime qualities of a good officer, as he often said, were authority and decision. It is probably true of

democracies that they prefer and will follow the man who will take with them a strong tone. Little men, however, cannot see this and think to gain support by shifty changes of opinion to please the multitude. What authority and decision could be expected from an officer of the peasant type, elected by his own men? How could he dominate men whose short term of service was expiring and who had to be coaxed to renew it? Some elected officers had to promise to pool their pay with that of their men. In one company an officer fulfilled the double position of captain and barber. In time, however, the authority of military rank came to be respected throughout the whole army. An amusing contrast with earlier conditions is found in 1779 when a captain was tried by a brigade court-martial and dismissed from the service for intimate association with the wagon-maker of the brigade.

The first thing to do at Cambridge was to get rid of the inefficient and the corrupt. Washington had never any belief in a militia army. From his earliest days as a soldier he had favored conscription, even in free Virginia. He had then found quite ineffective the "whooping, holloing gentlemen soldiers" of the volunteer force of the colony

among whom "every individual has his own crude notion of things and must undertake to direct. If his advice is neglected he thinks himself slighted, abused, and injured and, to redress his wrongs, will depart for his home." Washington found at Cambridge too many officers. Then as later in the American army there were swarms of colonels. The officers from Massachusetts, conscious that they had seen the first fighting in the great cause, expected special consideration from a stranger serving on their own soil. Soon they had a rude awakening. Washington broke a Massachusetts colonel and two captains because they had proved cowards at Bunker Hill, two more captains for fraud in drawing pay and provisions for men who did not exist, and still another for absence from his post when he was needed. He put in jail a colonel, a major, and three or four other officers. "New lords, new laws," wrote in his diary Mr. Emerson, the chaplain: "the Generals Washington and Lee are upon the lines every day . . . great distinction is made between officers and soldiers."

The term of all the volunteers in Washington's army expired by the end of 1775, so that he had to create a new army during the siege of Boston. He spoke scornfully of an enemy so little enterprising

as to remain supine during the process. But probably the British were wise to avoid a venture inland and to remain in touch with their fleet. Washington made them uneasy when he drove away the cattle from the neighborhood. Soon beef was selling in Boston for as much as eighteen pence a pound. Food might reach Boston in ships but supplies even by sea were insecure, for the Americans soon had privateers manned by seamen familiar with New England waters and happy in expected gains from prize money. The British were anxious about the elementary problem of food. They might have made Washington more uncomfortable by forays and alarms. Only reluctantly, however, did Howe, who took over the command on October 10, 1775, admit to himself that this was a real war. He still hoped for settlement without further bloodshed. Washington was glad to learn that the British were laying in supplies of coal for the winter. It meant that they intended to stay in Boston, where, more than in any other place, he could make trouble for them.

Washington had more on his mind than the creation of an army and the siege of Boston. He had also to decide the strategy of the war. On the long American sea front Boston alone remained in

British hands. New York, Philadelphia, Charleston and other ports farther south were all, for the time, on the side of the Revolution. Boston was not a good naval base for the British, since it commanded no great waterway leading inland. The sprawling colonies, from the rock-bound coast of New England to the swamps and forests of Georgia, were strong in their incoherent vastness. There were a thousand miles of seacoast. Only rarely were considerable settlements to be found more than a hundred miles distant from salt water. An army marching to the interior would have increasing difficulties from transport and supplies. Wherever water routes could be used the naval power of the British gave them an advantage. One such route was the Hudson, less a river than a navigable arm of the sea, leading to the heart of the colony of New York, its upper waters almost touching Lake George and Lake Champlain, which in turn led to the St. Lawrence in Canada and thence to the sea. Canada was held by the British; and it was clear that, if they should take the city of New York, they might command the whole line from the mouth of the Hudson to the St. Lawrence, and so cut off New England from the other colonies and overcome a divided enemy. To foil this policy



Washington planned to hold New York and to capture Canada. With Canada in line the union of the colonies would be indeed continental, and, if the British were driven from Boston, they would have no secure foothold in North America.

The danger from Canada had always been a source of anxiety to the English colonies. The French had made Canada a base for attempts to drive the English from North America. During many decades war had raged along the Canadian frontier. With the cession of Canada to Britain in 1763 this danger had vanished. The old habit endured, however, of fear of Canada. When, in 1774, the British Parliament passed the bill for the government of Canada known as the Quebec Act, there was violent clamor. The measure was assumed to be a calculated threat against colonial liberty. The Quebec Act continued in Canada the French civil law and the ancient privileges of the Roman Catholic Church. It guaranteed order in the wild western region north of the Ohio, taken recently from France, by placing it under the authority long exercised there of the Governor of Quebec. Only a vivid imagination would conceive that to allow to the French in Canada their old loved customs and laws involved designs against the freedom under

English law in the other colonies, or that to let the Canadians retain in respect to religion what they had always possessed meant a sinister plot against the Protestantism of the English colonies. Yet Alexander Hamilton, perhaps the greatest mind in the American Revolution, had frantic suspicions. French laws in Canada involved, he said, the extension of French despotism in the English colonies. The privileges continued to the Roman Catholic Church in Canada would be followed in due course by the Inquisition, the burning of heretics at the stake in Boston and New York, and the bringing from Europe of Roman Catholic settlers who would prove tools for the destruction of religious liberty. Military rule at Quebec meant, sooner or later, despotism everywhere in America. We may smile now at the youthful Hamilton's picture of "dark designs" and "deceitful wiles" on the part of that fierce Protestant George III to establish Roman Catholic despotism, but the colonies regarded the danger as serious. The quick remedy would be simply to take Canada, as Washington now planned.

To this end something had been done before Washington assumed the command. The British Fort Ticonderoga, on the neck of land separating

Lake Champlain from Lake George, commanded the route from New York to Canada. The fight at Lexington in April had been quickly followed by aggressive action against this British stronghold. No news of Lexington had reached the fort when early in May Colonel Ethan Allen, with Benedict Arnold serving as a volunteer in his force of eighty-three men, arrived in friendly guise. The fort was held by only forty-eight British; with the menace from France at last ended they felt secure; discipline was slack, for there was nothing to do. The incompetent commander testified that he lent Allen twenty men for some rough work on the lake. By evening Allen had them all drunk and then it was easy, without firing a shot, to capture the fort with a rush. The door to Canada was open. Great stores of ammunition and a hundred and twenty guns, which in due course were used against the British at Boston, fell into American hands.

About Canada Washington was ill-informed. He thought of the Canadians as if they were Virginians or New Yorkers. They had been recently conquered by Britain; their new king was a tyrant; they would desire liberty and would welcome an American army. So reasoned Washington, but without knowledge. The Canadians were a

conquered people, but they had found the British king no tyrant and they had experienced the paradox of being freer under the conqueror than they had been under their own sovereign. The last days of French rule in Canada were disgraced by corruption and tyranny almost unbelievable. The Canadian peasant had been cruelly robbed and he had conceived for his French rulers a dislike which appears still in his attitude towards the motherland of France. For his new British master he had assuredly no love, but he was no longer dragged off to war and his property was not plundered. He was free, too, to speak his mind. During the first twenty years after the British conquest of Canada the Canadian French matured indeed an assertive liberty not even dreamed of during the previous century and a half of French rule.

The British tyranny which Washington pictured in Canada was thus not very real. He underestimated, too, the antagonism between the Roman Catholics of Canada and the Protestants of the English colonies. The Congress at Philadelphia in denouncing the Quebec Act had accused the Catholic Church of bigotry, persecution, murder, and rebellion. This was no very tactful appeal for sympathy to the sons of that France which was still

the eldest daughter of the Church and it was hardly helped by a *maladroit* turn suggesting that "low-minded infirmities" should not permit such differences to block union in the sacred cause of liberty. Washington believed that two battalions of Canadians might be recruited to fight the British, and that the French Acadians of Nova Scotia, a people so remote that most of them hardly knew what the war was about, were tingling with sympathy for the American cause. In truth the Canadian was not prepared to fight on either side. What the priest and the landowner could do to make him fight for Britain was done, but, for all that, Sir Guy Carleton, the Governor of Canada, found recruiting impossible.

Washington believed that the war would be won by the side which held Canada. He saw that from Canada would be determined the attitude of the savages dwelling in the wild spaces of the interior; he saw, too, that Quebec as a military base in British hands would be a source of grave danger. The easy capture of Fort Ticonderoga led him to underrate difficulties. If Ticonderoga why not Quebec? Nova Scotia might be occupied later, the Acadians helping. Thus it happened that, soon after taking over the command, Washington was

busy with a plan for the conquest of Canada. Two forces were to advance into that country; one by way of Lake Champlain under General Schuyler and the other through the forests of Maine under Benedict Arnold.

Schuyler was obliged through illness to give up his command, and it was an odd fortune of war that put General Richard Montgomery at the head of the expedition going by way of Lake Champlain. Montgomery had served with Wolfe at the taking of Louisbourg and had been an officer in the proud British army which had received the surrender of Canada in 1760. Not without searching of heart had Montgomery turned against his former sovereign. He was living in America when war broke out; he had married into an American family of position; and he had come to the view that vital liberty was challenged by the King. Now he did his work well, in spite of very bad material in his army. His New Englanders were, he said, "every man a general and not one of them a soldier." They feigned sickness, though, as far as he had learned, there was "not a man dead of any distemper." No better were the men from New York, "the sweepings of the streets" with morals "infamous." Of the officers, too, Montgomery had a

poor opinion. Like Washington he declared that it was necessary to get gentlemen, men of education and integrity, as officers, or disaster would follow. Nevertheless St. Johns, a British post on the Richelieu, about thirty miles across country from Montreal, fell to Montgomery on the 3d of November, after a siege of six weeks; and British regulars under Major Preston, a brave and competent officer, yielded to a crude volunteer army with whole regiments lacking uniforms. Montreal could make no defense. On the 12th of November Montgomery entered Montreal and was in control of the St. Lawrence almost to the cliffs of Quebec. Canada seemed indeed an easy conquest.

The adventurous Benedict Arnold went on an expedition more hazardous. He had persuaded Washington of the impossible, that he could advance through the wilderness from the seacoast of Maine and take Quebec by surprise. News travels even by forest pathways. Arnold made a wonderful effort. Chill autumn was upon him when, on the 25th of September, with about a thousand picked men, he began to advance up the Kennebec River and over the height of land to the upper waters of the Chaudière, which discharges into the St. Lawrence opposite Quebec. There were heavy



rains. Sometimes the men had to wade breast high in dragging heavy and leaking boats over the difficult places. A good many men died of starvation. Others deserted and turned back. The indomitable Arnold pressed on, however, and on the 9th of November, a few days before Montgomery occupied Montreal, he stood with some six hundred worn and shivering men on the strand of the St. Lawrence opposite Quebec. He had not surprised the city and it looked grim and inaccessible as he surveyed it across the great river. In the autumn gales it was not easy to carry over his little army in small boats. But this he accomplished and then waited for Montgomery to join him.

By the 3d of December Montgomery was with Arnold before Quebec. They had hardly more than a thousand effective troops, together with a few hundred Canadians, upon whom no reliance could be placed. Carleton, commanding at Quebec, sat tight and would hold no communication with despised "rebels." "They all pretend to be gentlemen," said an astonished British officer in Quebec, when he heard that among the American officers now captured by the British there were a former blacksmith, a butcher, a shoemaker, and an innkeeper. Montgomery was stung to violent

threats by Carleton's contempt, but never could he draw from Carleton a reply. At last Montgomery tried, in the dark of early morning of New Year's Day, 1776, to carry Quebec by storm. He was to lead an attack on the Lower Town from the west side, while Arnold was to enter from the opposite side. When they met in the center they were to storm the citadel on the heights above. They counted on the help of the French inhabitants, from whom Carleton said bitterly enough that he had nothing to fear in prosperity and nothing to hope for in adversity. Arnold pressed his part of the attack with vigor and penetrated to the streets of the Lower Town where he fell wounded. Captain Daniel Morgan, who took over the command, was made prisoner.

Montgomery's fate was more tragic. In spite of protests from his officers, he led in person the attack from the west side of the fortress. The advance was along a narrow road under the towering cliffs of a great precipice. The attack was expected by the British and the guard at the barrier was ordered to hold its fire until the enemy was near. Suddenly there was a roar of cannon and the assailants not swept down fled in panic. With the morning light the dead head of Montgomery was

found protruding from the snow. He was mourned by Washington and with reason. He had talents and character which might have made him one of the chief leaders of the revolutionary army. Elsewhere, too, was he mourned. His father, an Irish landowner, had been a member of the British Parliament, and he himself was a Whig, known to Fox and Burke. When news of his death reached England eulogies upon him came from the Whig benches in Parliament which could not have been stronger had he died fighting for the King.

While the outlook in Canada grew steadily darker, the American cause prospered before Boston. There Howe was not at ease. If it was really to be war, which he still doubted, it would be well to seek some other base. Washington helped Howe to take action. Dorchester Heights commanded Boston as critically from the south as did Bunker Hill from the north. By the end of February Washington had British cannon, brought with heavy labor from Ticonderoga, and then he lost no time. On the morning of March 5, 1776, Howe awoke to find that, under cover of a heavy bombardment, American troops had occupied Dorchester Heights and that if he would dislodge

them he must make another attack similar to that at Bunker Hill. The alternative of stiff fighting was the evacuation of Boston. Howe, though dilatory, was a good fighting soldier. His defects as a general in America sprang in part from his belief that the war was unjust and that delay might bring counsels making for peace and save bloodshed. His first decision was to attack, but a furious gale thwarted his purpose, and he then prepared for the inevitable step.

Washington divined Howe's purpose and there was a tacit agreement that the retiring army should not be molested. Howe destroyed munitions of war which he could not take away but he left intact the powerful defenses of Boston, defenses reared at the cost of Britain. Many of the better class of the inhabitants, British in their sympathies, were now face to face with bitter sorrow and sacrifice. Passions were so aroused that a hard fate awaited them should they remain in Boston and they decided to leave with the British army. Travel by land was blocked; they could go only by sea. When the time came to depart, laden carriages, trucks, and wheelbarrows crowded to the quays through the narrow streets and a sad procession of exiles went out from their homes. A profane critic

said that they moved "as if the very devil was after them." No doubt many of them would have been arrogant and merciless to "rebels" had theirs been the triumph. But the day was above all a day of sorrow. Edward Winslow, a strong leader among them, tells of his tears "at leaving our once happy town of Boston." The ships, a forest of masts, set sail and, crowded with soldiers and refugees, headed straight out to sea for Halifax. Abigail, wife of John Adams, a clever woman, watched the departure of the fleet with gladness in her heart. She thought that never before had been seen in America so many ships bearing so many people. Washington's army marched joyously into Boston. Joyous it might well be since, for the moment, powerful Britain was not secure in a single foot of territory in the former colonies. If Quebec should fall the continent would be almost conquered.

Quebec did not fall. All through the winter the Americans held on before the place. They shivered from cold. They suffered from the dread disease of smallpox. They had difficulty in getting food. The Canadians were insistent on having good money for what they offered and since good money was not always in the treasury the invading army

sometimes used violence. Then the Canadians became more reserved and chilling than ever. In hope of mending matters Congress sent a commission to Montreal in the spring of 1776. Its chairman was Benjamin Franklin and, with him, were two leading Roman Catholics, Charles Carroll of Carrollton, a great landowner of Maryland, and his brother John, a priest, afterwards Archbishop of Baltimore. It was not easy to represent as the liberator of the Catholic Canadians the Congress which had denounced in scathing terms the concessions in the Quebec Act to the Catholic Church. Franklin was a master of conciliation, but before he achieved anything a dramatic event happened. On the 6th of May, British ships arrived at Quebec. The inhabitants rushed to the ramparts. Cries of joy passed from street to street and they reached the little American army, now under General Thomas, encamped on the Plains of Abraham. Panic seized the small force which had held on so long. On the ships were ten thousand fresh British troops. The one thing for the Americans to do was to get away; and they fled, leaving behind guns, supplies, even clothing and private papers. Five days later Franklin, at Montreal, was dismayed by the distressing news of disaster.

Congress sent six regiments to reinforce the army which had fled from Quebec. It was a desperate venture. Washington's orders were that the Americans should fight the new British army as near Quebec as possible. The decisive struggle took place on the 8th of June. An American force under the command of General Thompson attacked Three Rivers, a town on the St. Lawrence, half way between Quebec and Montreal. They were repulsed and the general was taken prisoner. The wonder is indeed that the army was not annihilated. Then followed a disastrous retreat. Short of supplies, ravaged by smallpox, and in bad weather, the invaders tried to make their way back to Lake Champlain. They evacuated Montreal. It is hard enough in the day of success to hold together an untrained army. In the day of defeat such a force is apt to become a mere rabble. Some of the American regiments preserved discipline. Others fell into complete disorder as, weak and discouraged, they retired to Lake Champlain. Many soldiers perished of disease. "I did not look into a hut or a tent," says an observer, "in which I did not find a dead or dying man." Those who had huts were fortunate. The fate of some was to die without medical care and without cover. By



the end of June what was left of the force had reached Crown Point on Lake Champlain.

Benedict Arnold, who had been wounded at Quebec, was now at Crown Point. Competent critics of the war have held that what Arnold now did saved the Revolution. In another scene, before the summer ended, the British had taken New York and made themselves masters of the lower Hudson. Had they reached in the same season the upper Hudson by way of Lake Champlain they would have struck blows doubly staggering. This Arnold saw, and his object was to delay, if he could not defeat, the British advance. There was no road through the dense forest by the shores of Lake Champlain and Lake George to the upper Hudson. The British must go down the lake in boats. This General Carleton had foreseen and he had urged that with the fleet sent to Quebec should be sent from England, in sections, boats which could be quickly carried past the rapids of the Richelieu River and launched on Lake Champlain. They had not come and the only thing for Carleton to do was to build a flotilla which could carry an army up the lake and attack Crown Point. The thing was done but skilled workmen were few and not until the 5th of October were the little ships afloat

on Lake Champlain. Arnold, too, spent the summer in building boats to meet the attack and it was a strange turn in warfare which now made him commander in a naval fight. There was a brisk struggle on Lake Champlain. Carleton had a score or so of vessels; Arnold not so many. But he delayed Carleton. When he was beaten on the water he burned the ships not captured and took to the land. When he could no longer hold Crown Point he burned that place and retreated to Ticonderoga.

By this time it was late autumn. The British were far from their base and the Americans were retreating into a friendly country. There is little doubt that Carleton could have taken Fort Ticonderoga. It fell quite easily less than a year later. Some of his officers urged him to press on and do it. But the leaves had already fallen, the bleak winter was near, and Carleton pictured to himself an army buried deeply in an enemy country and separated from its base by many scores of miles of lake and forest. He withdrew to Canada and left Lake Champlain to the Americans.

## CHAPTER III

### INDEPENDENCE

WELL-MEANING people in England found it difficult to understand the intensity of feeling in America. Britain had piled up a huge debt in driving France from America. Landowners were paying in taxes no less than twenty per cent of their incomes from land. The people who had chiefly benefited by the humiliation of France were the colonists, now freed from hostile menace and secure for extension over a whole continent. Why should not they pay some share of the cost of their own security? Certain facts tended to make Englishmen indignant with the Americans. Every effort had failed to get them to pay willingly for their defense. Before the Stamp Act had become law in 1765 the colonies were given a whole year to devise the raising of money in any way which they liked better. The burden of what was asked would be light. Why should not they agree to bear it? Why this talk,

repeated by the Whigs in the British Parliament, of brutal tyranny, oppression, hired minions imposing slavery, and so on. Where were the oppressed? Could any one point to a single person who before war broke out had known British tyranny? What suffering could any one point to as the result of the tax on tea? The people of England paid a tax on tea four times heavier than that paid in America. Was not the British Parliament supreme over the whole Empire? Did not the colonies themselves admit that it had the right to control their trade overseas? And if men shirk their duty should they not come under some law of compulsion?

It was thus that many a plain man reasoned in England. The plain man in America had his own opposing point of view. Debts and taxes in England were not his concern. He remembered the recent war as vividly as did the Englishman, and, if the English paid its cost in gold, he had paid his share in blood and tears. Who made up the armies led by the British generals in America? More than half the total number who served in America came from the colonies, the colonies which had barely a third of the population of Great Britain. True, Britain paid the bill in money but why not? She

was rich with a vast accumulated capital. The war, partly in America, had given her the key to the wealth of India. Look at the magnificence, the pomp of servants, plate and pictures, the parks and gardens, of hundreds of English country houses, and compare this opulence with the simple mode of life, simplicity imposed by necessity, of a country gentleman like George Washington of Virginia, reputed to be the richest man in America. Thousands of tenants in England, owning no acre of land, were making a larger income than was possible in America to any owner of broad acres. It was true that America had gained from the late war. The foreign enemy had been struck down. But had he not been struck down too for England? Had there not been far more dread in England of invasion by France and had not the colonies by helping to ruin France freed England as much as England had freed them? If now the colonies were asked to pay a share of the bill for the British army that was a matter for discussion. They had never before done it and they must not be told that they had to meet the demand within a year or be compelled to pay. Was it not to impose tyranny and slavery to tell a people that their property would be taken by force if they did not choose to give it.

What free man would not rather die than yield on such a point?

The familiar workings of modern democracy have taught us that a great political issue must be discussed in broad terms of high praise or severe blame. The contestants will exaggerate both the virtue of the side they espouse and the malignity of the opposing side; nice discrimination is not possible. It was inevitable that the dispute with the colonies should arouse angry vehemence on both sides. The passionate speech of Patrick Henry in Virginia, in 1763, which made him famous, and was the forerunner of his later appeal, "Give me Liberty or give me Death," related to so prosaic a question as the right of disallowance by England of an act passed by a colonial legislature, a right exercised long and often before that time and to this day a part of the constitutional machinery of the British Empire. Few men have lived more serenely poised than Washington, yet, as we have seen, he hated the British with an implacable hatred. He was a humane man. In earlier years, Indian raids on the farmers of Virginia had stirred him to "deadly sorrow," and later, during his retreat from New York, he was moved by the cries of the weak and infirm. Yet the same man felt no

touch of pity for the Loyalists of the Revolution. To him they were detestable parricides, vile traitors, with no right to live. When we find this note in Washington, in America, we hardly wonder that the high Tory, Samuel Johnson, in England, should write that the proposed taxation was no tyranny, that it had not been imposed earlier because "we do not put a calf into the plough; we wait till he is an ox," and that the Americans were "a race of convicts, and ought to be thankful for anything which we allow them short of hanging." Tyranny and treason are both ugly things. Washington believed that he was fighting the one, Johnson that he was fighting the other, and neither side would admit the charge against itself.

Such are the passions aroused by civil strife. We need not now, when they are, or ought to be, dead, spend any time in deploring them. It suffices to explain them and the events to which they led. There was one and really only one final issue. Were the American colonies free to govern themselves as they liked or might their government in the last analysis be regulated by Great Britain? The truth is that the colonies had reached a condition in which they regarded themselves as British states with their own parliaments, exercising



complete jurisdiction in their own affairs. They intended to use their own judgment and they were as restless under attempted control from England as England would have been under control from America. We can indeed always understand the point of view of Washington if we reverse the position and imagine what an Englishman would have thought of a claim by America to tax him.

An ancient and proud society is reluctant to change. After a long and successful war England was prosperous. To her now came riches from India and the ends of the earth. In society there was such lavish expenditure that Horace Walpole declared an income of twenty thousand pounds a year was barely enough. England had an aristocracy the proudest in the world, for it had not only rank but wealth. The English people were certain of the invincible superiority of their nation. Every Englishman was taught, as Disraeli said of a later period, to believe that he occupied a position better than any one else of his own degree in any other country in the world. The merchant in England was believed to surpass all others in wealth and integrity, the manufacturer to have no rivals in skill, the British sailor to stand in a class by himself, the British officer to express the last word in

chivalry. It followed, of course, that the motherland was superior to her children overseas. The colonies had no aristocracy, no great landowners living in stately palaces. They had almost no manufactures. They had no imposing state system with places and pensions from which the fortunate might reap a harvest of ten or even twenty thousand pounds a year. They had no ancient universities thronged by gilded youth who, if noble, might secure degrees without the trying ceremony of an examination. They had no Established Church with the ancient glories of its cathedrals. In all America there was not even a bishop. In spite of these contrasts the English Whigs insisted upon the political equality with themselves of the American colonists. The Tory squire, however, shared Samuel Johnson's view that colonists were either traders or farmers and that colonial shopkeeping society was vulgar and contemptible.

George III was ill-fitted by nature to deal with the crisis. The King was not wholly without natural parts, for his own firm will had achieved what earlier kings had tried and failed to do; he had mastered Parliament, made it his obedient tool and himself for a time a despot. He had some admirable virtues. He was a family man, the

father of fifteen children. He liked quiet amusements and had wholesome tastes. If industry and belief in his own aims could of themselves make a man great we might reverence George. He wrote once to Lord North: "I have no object but to be of use: if that is ensured I am completely happy." The King was always busy. Ceaseless industry does not, however, include every virtue, or the author of all evil would rank high in goodness. Wisdom must be the pilot of good intentions. George was not wise. He was ill-educated. He had never traveled. He had no power to see the point of view of others.

As if nature had not sufficiently handicapped George for a high part, fate placed him on the throne at the immature age of twenty-two. Henceforth the boy was master, not pupil. Great nobles and obsequious prelates did him reverence. Ignorant and obstinate, the young King was determined not only to reign but to rule, in spite of the new doctrine that Parliament, not the King, carried on the affairs of government through the leader of the majority in the House of Commons, already known as the Prime Minister. George could not really change what was the last expression of political forces in England. The rule of Parliament

had come to stay. Through it and it alone could the realm be governed. This power, however, though it could not be destroyed, might be controlled. Parliament, while retaining all its privileges, might yet carry out the wishes of the sovereign. The King might be his own Prime Minister. The thing could be done if the King's friends held a majority of the seats and would do what their master directed. It was a dark day for England when a king found that he could play off one faction against another, buy a majority in Parliament, and retain it either by paying with guineas or with posts and dignities which the bought Parliament left in his gift. This corruption it was which ruined the first British Empire.

We need not doubt that George thought it his right and also his duty to coerce America, or rather, as he said, the clamorous minority which was trying to force rebellion. He showed no lack of sincerity. On October 26, 1775, while Washington was besieging Boston, he opened Parliament with a speech which at any rate made the issue clear enough. Britain would not give up colonies which she had founded with severe toil and nursed with great kindness. Her army and her navy, both now increased in size, would make her power respected.

She would not, however, deal harshly with her erring children. Royal mercy would be shown to those who admitted their error and they need not come to England to secure it. Persons in America would be authorized to grant pardons and furnish the guarantees which would proceed from the royal clemency.

Such was the magnanimity of George III. Washington's rage at the tone of the speech is almost amusing in its vehemence. He, with a mind conscious of rectitude and sacrifice in a great cause, to ask pardon for his course! He to bend the knee to this tyrant overseas! Washington himself was not highly gifted with imagination. He never realized the strength of the forces in England arrayed on his own side and attributed to the English, as a whole, sinister and malignant designs always condemned by the great mass of the English people. They, no less than the Americans, were the victims of a turn in politics which, for a brief period, and for only a brief period, left power in the hands of a corrupt Parliament and a corrupting king.

Ministers were not all corrupt or place-hunters. One of them, the Earl of Dartmouth, was a saint in spirit. Lord North, the king's chief minister,

was not corrupt. He disliked his office and wished to leave it. In truth no sweeping simplicity of condemnation will include all the ministers of George III except on this one point that they allowed to dictate their policy a narrow-minded and ignorant king. It was their right to furnish a policy and to exercise the powers of government, appoint to office, spend the public revenues. Instead they let the King say that the opinions of his ministers had no avail with him. If we ask why, the answer is that there was a mixture of motives. North stayed in office because the King appealed to his loyalty, a plea hard to resist under an ancient monarchy. Others stayed from love of power or for what they could get. In that golden age of patronage it was possible for a man to hold a plurality of offices which would bring to himself many thousands of pounds a year, and also to secure the reversion of offices and pensions to his children. Horace Walpole spent a long life in luxurious ease because of offices with high pay and few duties secured in the distant days of his father's political power. Contracts to supply the army and the navy went to friends of the government, sometimes with disastrous results, since the contractor often knew nothing of the business he undertook. When,

in 1777, the Admiralty boasted that thirty-five ships of war were ready to put to sea it was found that there were in fact only six. The system nearly ruined the navy. It actually happened that planks of a man-of-war fell out through rot and that she sank. Often ropes and spars could not be had when most needed. When a public loan was floated the King's friends and they alone were given the shares at a price which enabled them to make large profits on the stock market.

The system could endure only as long as the King's friends had a majority in the House of Commons. Elections must be looked after. The King must have those on whom he could always depend. He controlled offices and pensions. With these things he bought members and he had to keep them bought by repeating the benefits. If the holder of a public office was thought to be dying the King was already naming to his Prime Minister the person to whom the office must go when death should occur. He insisted that many posts previously granted for life should now be given during his pleasure so that he might dismiss the holders at will. He watched the words and the votes in Parliament of public men and woe to those in his power if they displeased him. When he knew that



Fox, his great antagonist, would be absent from Parliament he pressed through measures which Fox would have opposed. It was not until George III was King that the buying and selling of boroughs became common. The King bought votes in the boroughs by paying high prices for trifles. He even went over the lists of voters and had names of servants of the government inserted if this seemed needed to make a majority secure. One of the most unedifying scenes in English history is that of George making a purchase in a shop at Windsor and because of this patronage asking for the shopkeeper's support in a local election. The King was saving and penurious in his habits that he might have the more money to buy votes. When he had no money left he would go to Parliament and ask for a special grant for his needs and the bought members could not refuse the money for their buying.

The people of England knew that Parliament was corrupt. But how to end the system? The press was not free. Some of it the government bought and the rest it tried to intimidate though often happily in vain. Only fragments of the debates in Parliament were published. Not until 1779 did the House of Commons admit the public

to its galleries. No great political meetings were allowed until just before the American war and in any case the masses had no votes. The great land-owners had in their control a majority of the constituencies. There were scores of pocket boroughs in which their nominees were as certain of election as peers were of their seats in the House of Lords. The disease of England was deep-seated. A wise king could do much, but while George III survived — and his reign lasted sixty years — there was no hope of a wise king. A strong minister could impose his will on the King. But only time and circumstance could evolve a strong minister. Time and circumstance at length produced the younger Pitt. But it needed the tragedy of two long wars — those against the colonies and revolutionary France — before the nation finally threw off the system which permitted the personal rule of George III and caused the disruption of the Empire. It may thus be said with some truth that George Washington was instrumental in the salvation of England.

The ministers of George III loved the sports, the rivalries, the ease, the remoteness of their rural magnificence. Perverse fashion kept them in London even in April and May for “the season,” just

when in the country nature was most alluring. Otherwise they were off to their estates whenever they could get away from town. The American Revolution was not remotely affected by this habit. With ministers long absent in the country important questions were postponed or forgotten. The crisis which in the end brought France into the war was partly due to the carelessness of a minister hurrying away to the country. Lord George Germain, who directed military operations in America, dictated a letter which would have caused General Howe to move northward from New York to meet General Burgoyne advancing from Canada. Germain went off to the country without waiting to sign the letter; it was mislaid among other papers; Howe was without needed instructions; and the disaster followed of Burgoyne's surrender. Fox pointed out, that, at a time when there was a danger that a foreign army might land in England, not one of the King's ministers was less than fifty miles from London. They were in their parks and gardens, or hunting or fishing. Nor did they stay away for a few days only. The absence was for weeks or even months.

It is to the credit of Whig leaders in England, landowners and aristocrats as they were, that they

supported with passion the American cause. In America, where the forces of the Revolution were in control, the Loyalist who dared to be bold for his opinions was likely to be tarred and feathered and to lose his property. There was an embittered intolerance. In England, however, it was an open question in society whether to be for or against the American cause. The Duke of Richmond, a great grandson of Charles II, said in the House of Lords that under no code should the fighting Americans be considered traitors. What they did was "perfectly justifiable in every possible political and moral sense." All the world knows that Chat-ham and Burke and Fox urged the conciliation of America and hundreds took the same stand. Burke said of General Conway, a man of position, that when he secured a majority in the House of Commons against the Stamp Act his face shone as the face of an angel. Since the bishops almost to a man voted with the King, Conway attacked them as in this untrue to their high office. Sir George Savile, whose benevolence, supported by great wealth, made him widely respected and loved, said that the Americans were right in appealing to arms. Coke of Norfolk was a landed magnate who lived in regal style. His seat of Holkham was one of

those great new palaces which the age reared at such elaborate cost. It was full of beautiful things — the art of Michelangelo, Raphael, Titian, and Van Dyke, rare manuscripts, books, and tapestries. So magnificent was Coke that a legend long ran that his horses were shod with gold and that the wheels of his chariots were of solid silver. In the country he drove six horses. In town only the King did this. Coke despised George III, chiefly on account of his American policy, and to avoid the reproach of rivaling the King's estate, he took joy in driving past the palace in London with a donkey as his sixth animal and in flicking his whip at the King. When he was offered a peerage by the King he denounced with fiery wrath the minister through whom it was offered as attempting to bribe him. Coke declared that if one of the King's ministers held up a hat in the House of Commons and said that it was a green bag the majority of the members would solemnly vote that it was a green bag. The bribery which brought this blind obedience of Toryism filled Coke with fury. In youth he had been taught never to trust a Tory and he could say "I never have and, by God, I never will." One of his children asked their mother whether Tories were born wicked or after birth became wicked.

The uncompromising answer was: "They are born wicked and they grow up worse."

There is, of course, in much of this something of the malignance of party. In an age when one reverend theologian, Toplady, called another theologian, John Wesley, "a low and puny tadpole in Divinity" we must expect harsh epithets. But behind this bitterness lay a deep conviction of the righteousness of the American cause. At a great banquet at Holkham, Coke omitted the toast of the King; but every night during the American war he drank the health of Washington as the greatest man on earth. The war, he said, was the King's war, ministers were his tools, the press was bought. He denounced later the King's reception of the traitor Arnold. When the King's degenerate son, who became George IV, after some special misconduct, wrote to propose his annual visit to Holkham, Coke replied, "Holkham is open to *strangers* on Tuesdays." It was an independent and irate England which spoke in Coke. Those who paid taxes, he said, should control those who governed. America was not getting fair play. Both Coke and Fox, and no doubt many others, wore waistcoats of blue and buff because these were the colors of the uniforms of Washington's army.

Washington and Coke exchanged messages and they would have been congenial companions; for Coke, like Washington, was above all a farmer and tried to improve agriculture. Never for a moment, he said, had time hung heavy on his hands in the country. He began on his estate the culture of the potato, and for some time the best he could hear of it from his stolid tenantry was that it would not poison the pigs. Coke would have fought the levy of a penny of unjust taxation and he understood Washington. The American gentleman and the English gentleman had a common outlook.

Now had come, however, the hour for political separation. By reluctant but inevitable steps America made up its mind to declare for independence. At first continued loyalty to the King was urged on the plea that he was in the hands of evil-minded ministers, inspired by diabolical rage, or in those of an "infernal villain" such as the soldier, General Gage, a second Pharaoh; though it must be admitted that even then the King was "the tyrant of Great Britain." After Bunker Hill spasmodic declarations of independence were made here and there by local bodies. When Congress



organized an army, invaded Canada, and besieged Boston, it was hard to protest loyalty to a King whose forces were those of an enemy. Moreover independence would, in the eyes at least of foreign governments, give the colonies the rights of belligerents and enable them to claim for their fighting forces the treatment due to a regular army and the exchange of prisoners with the British. They could, too, make alliances with other nations. Some clamored for independence for a reason more sinister — that they might punish those who held to the King and seize their property. There were thirteen colonies in arms and each of them had to form some kind of government which would work without a king as part of its mechanism. One by one such governments were formed. King George, as we have seen, helped the colonies to make up their minds. They were in no mood to be called erring children who must implore undeserved mercy and not force a loving parent to take unwilling vengeance. “Our plantations” and “our subjects in the colonies” would simply not learn obedience. If George III would not reply to their petitions until they laid down their arms, they could manage to get on without a king. If England, as Horace Walpole admitted, would not take them

seriously and speakers in Parliament called them obscure ruffians and cowards, so much the worse for England.

It was an Englishman, Thomas Paine, who fanned the fire into unquenchable flames. He had recently been dismissed from a post in the excise in England and was at this time earning in Philadelphia a precarious living by his pen. Paine said it was the interest of America to break the tie with Europe. Was a whole continent in America to be governed by an island a thousand leagues away? Of what advantage was it to remain connected with Great Britain? It was said that a united British Empire could defy the world, but why should America defy the world? "Everything that is right or natural pleads for separation." Interested men, weak men, prejudiced men, moderate men who do not really know Europe, may urge reconciliation, but nature is against it. Paine broke loose in that denunciation of kings with which ever since the world has been familiar. The wretched Briton, said Paine, is under a king and where there was a king there was no security for liberty. Kings were crowned ruffians and George III in particular was a sceptered savage, a royal brute, and other evil things. He had inflicted on America injuries not

to be forgiven. The blood of the slain, not less than the true interests of posterity, demanded separation. Paine called his pamphlet *Common Sense*. It was published on January 9, 1776. More than a hundred thousand copies were quickly sold and it brought decision to many wavering minds.

In the first days of 1776 independence had become a burning question. New England had made up its mind. Virginia was keen for separation, keener even than New England. New York and Pennsylvania long hesitated and Maryland and North Carolina were very lukewarm. Early in 1776 Washington was advocating independence and Greene and other army leaders were of the same mind. Conservative forces delayed the settlement, and at last Virginia, in this as in so many other things taking the lead, instructed its delegates to urge a declaration by Congress of independence. Richard Henry Lee, a member of that honored family which later produced the ablest soldier of the Civil War, moved in Congress on June 7, 1776, that "these United Colonies are, and of right ought to be, Free and Independent States." The preparation of a formal declaration was referred to a committee of which John Adams and Thomas Jefferson were members. It is interesting

to note that each of them became President of the United States and that both died on July 4, 1826, the fiftieth anniversary of the Declaration of Independence. Adams related long after that he and Jefferson formed the sub-committee to draft the Declaration and that he urged Jefferson to undertake the task since "you can write ten times better than I can." Jefferson accordingly wrote the paper. Adams was delighted "with its high tone and the flights of Oratory" but he did not approve of the flaming attack on the King, as a tyrant. "I never believed," he said, "George to be a tyrant in disposition and in nature." There was, he thought, too much passion for a grave and solemn document. He was, however, the principal speaker in its support.

There is passion in the Declaration from beginning to end, and not the restrained and chastened passion which we find in the great utterances of an American statesman of a later day, Abraham Lincoln. Compared with Lincoln, Jefferson is indeed a mere amateur in the use of words. Lincoln would not have scattered in his utterances overwrought phrases about "death, desolation and tyranny" or talked about pledging "our lives, our fortunes and our sacred honour." He indulged in no "Flights

of Oratory.” The passion in the Declaration is concentrated against the King. We do not know what were the emotions of George when he read it. We know that many Englishmen thought that it spoke truth. Exaggerations there are which make the Declaration less than a completely candid document. The King is accused of abolishing English laws in Canada with the intention of “introducing the same absolute rule into these colonies.” What had been done in Canada was to let the conquered French retain their own laws — which was not tyranny but magnanimity. Another clause of the Declaration, as Jefferson first wrote it, made George responsible for the slave trade in America with all its horrors and crimes. We may doubt whether that not too enlightened monarch had even more than vaguely heard of the slave trade. This phase of the attack upon him was too much for the slave owners of the South and the slave traders of New England, and the clause was struck out.

Nearly fourscore and ten years later, Abraham Lincoln, at a supreme crisis in the nation’s life, told in Independence Hall, Philadelphia, what the Declaration of Independence meant to him. “I have never,” he said, “had a feeling politically

which did not spring from the sentiments in the Declaration of Independence"; and then he spoke of the sacrifices which the founders of the Republic had made for these principles. He asked, too, what was the idea which had held together the nation thus founded. It was not the breaking away from Great Britain. It was the assertion of human right. We should speak in terms of reverence of a document which became a classic utterance of political right and which inspired Lincoln in his fight to end slavery and to make "Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness" realities for all men. In England the colonists were often taunted with being "rebels." The answer was not wanting that ancestors of those who now cried "rebel" had themselves been rebels a hundred years earlier when their own liberty was at stake.

There were in Congress men who ventured to say that the Declaration was a libel on the government of England; men like John Dickinson of Pennsylvania and John Jay of New York, who feared that the radical elements were moving too fast. Radicalism, however, was in the saddle, and on the 2d of July the "resolution respecting independency" was adopted. On July 4, 1776, Congress debated and finally adopted the formal

Declaration of Independence. The members did not vote individually. The delegates from each colony cast the vote of the colony. Twelve colonies voted for the Declaration. New York alone was silent because its delegates had not been instructed as to their vote, but New York, too, soon fell into line. It was a momentous occasion and was understood to be such. The vote seems to have been reached in the late afternoon. Anxious citizens were waiting in the streets. There was a bell in the State House, and an old ringer waited there for the signal. When there was long delay he is said to have muttered: "They will never do it! they will never do it!" Then came the word, "Ring! Ring!" It is an odd fact that the inscription on the bell, placed there long before the days of the trouble, was from Leviticus: "*Proclaim liberty throughout all the land unto all the inhabitants thereof.*" The bells of Philadelphia rang and cannon boomed. As the news spread there were bonfires and illuminations in all the colonies. On the day after the Declaration the Virginia Convention struck out "O Lord, save the King" from the church service. On the 10th of July Washington, who by this time had moved to New York, paraded the army and had the Declaration read at the head of each brigade.



That evening the statue of King George in New York was laid in the dust. It is a comment on the changes in human fortune that within little more than a year the British had taken Philadelphia, that the clamorous bell had been hid away for safety, and that colonial wiseacres were urging the rescinding of the ill-timed Declaration and the reunion of the British Empire.

## CHAPTER IV

### THE LOSS OF NEW YORK

WASHINGTON'S success at Boston had one good effect. It destroyed Tory influence in that Puritan stronghold. New England was henceforth of a temper wholly revolutionary; and New England tradition holds that what its people think today other Americans think tomorrow. But, in the summer of this year 1776, though no serious foe was visible at any point in the revolted colonies, a menace haunted every one of them. The British had gone away by sea; by sea they would return. On land armies move slowly and visibly; but on the sea a great force may pass out of sight and then suddenly reappear at an unexpected point. This is the haunting terror of sea power. Already the British had destroyed Falmouth, now Portland, Maine, and Norfolk, the principal town in Virginia. Washington had no illusions of security. He was anxious above all for the safety of New

York, commanding the vital artery of the Hudson, which must at all costs be defended. Accordingly, in April, he took his army to New York and established there his own headquarters.

Even before Washington moved to New York, three great British expeditions were nearing America. One of these we have already seen at Quebec. Another was bound for Charleston, to land there an army and to make the place a rallying center for the numerous but harassed Loyalists of the South. The third and largest of these expeditions was to strike at New York and, by a show of strength, bring the colonists to reason and reconciliation. If mildness failed the British intended to capture New York, sail up the Hudson and cut off New England from the other colonies.

The squadron destined for Charleston carried an army in command of a fine soldier, Lord Cornwallis, destined later to be the defeated leader in the last dramatic scene of the war. In May this fleet reached Wilmington, North Carolina, and took on board two thousand men under General Sir Henry Clinton, who had been sent by Howe from Boston in vain to win the Carolinas and who now assumed military command of the combined forces. Admiral Sir Peter Parker commanded the fleet, and

on the 4th of June he was off Charleston Harbor. Parker found that in order to cross the bar he would have to lighten his larger ships. This was done by the laborious process of removing the guns, which, of course, he had to replace when the bar was crossed. On the 28th of June, Parker drew up his ships before Fort Moultrie in the harbor. He had expected simultaneous aid by land from three thousand soldiers put ashore from the fleet on a sandbar, but these troops could give him no help against the fort from which they were cut off by a channel of deep water. A battle soon proved the British ships unable to withstand the American fire from Fort Moultrie. Late in the evening Parker drew off, with two hundred and twenty-five casualties against an American loss of thirty-seven. The check was greater than that of Bunker Hill, for there the British took the ground which they attacked. The British sailors bore witness to the gallantry of the defense: "We never had such a drubbing in our lives," one of them testified. Only one of Parker's ten ships was seaworthy after the fight. It took him three weeks to refit, and not until the 4th of August did his defeated ships reach New York.

A mighty armada of seven hundred ships had

meanwhile sailed into the Bay of New York. This fleet was commanded by Admiral Lord Howe and it carried an army of thirty thousand men led by his younger brother, Sir William Howe, who had commanded at Bunker Hill. The General was an able and well-informed soldier. He had a brilliant record of service in the Seven Years' War, with Wolfe in Canada, then in France itself, and in the West Indies. In appearance he was tall, dark, and coarse. His face showed him to be a free user of wine. This may explain some of his faults as a general. He trusted too much to subordinates; he was leisurely and rather indolent, yet capable of brilliant and rapid action. In America his heart was never in his task. He was member of Parliament for Nottingham and had publicly condemned the quarrel with America and told his electors that in it he would take no command. He had not kept his word, but his convictions remained. It would be to accuse Howe of treason to say that he did not do his best in America. Lack of conviction, however, affects action. Howe had no belief that his country was in the right in the war and this handicapped him as against the passionate conviction of Washington that all was at stake which made life worth living.

The General's elder brother, Lord Howe, was another Whig who had no belief that the war was just. He sat in the House of Lords while his brother sat in the House of Commons. We rather wonder that the King should have been content to leave in Whig hands his fortunes in America both by land and sea. At any rate, here were the Howes more eager to make peace than to make war and commanded to offer terms of reconciliation. Lord Howe had an unpleasant face, so dark that he was called "Black Dick"; he was a silent, awkward man, shy and harsh in manner. In reality, however, he was kind, liberal in opinion, sober, and beloved by those who knew him best. His pacific temper towards America was not due to a dislike of war. He was a fighting sailor. Nearly twenty years later, on June 1, 1794, when he was in command of a fleet in touch with the French enemy, the sailors watched him to find any indication that the expected action would take place. Then the word went round: "We shall have the fight today; Black Dick has been smiling." They had it, and Howe won a victory which makes his name famous in the annals of the sea.

By the middle of July the two brothers were at New York. The soldier, having waited at Halifax

since the evacuation of Boston, had arrived, and landed his army on Staten Island, on the day before Congress made the Declaration of Independence, which, as now we can see, ended finally any chance of reconciliation. The sailor arrived nine days later. Lord Howe was wont to regret that he had not arrived a little earlier, since the concessions which he had to offer might have averted the Declaration of Independence. In truth, however, he had little to offer. Humor and imagination are useful gifts in carrying on human affairs, but George III had neither. He saw no lack of humor in now once more offering full and free pardon to a repentant Washington and his comrades, though John Adams was excepted by name<sup>1</sup>; in repudiating the right to exist of the Congress at Philadelphia, and in refusing to recognize the military rank of the rebel general whom it had named: he was to be addressed in civilian style as "George Washington Esq." The King and his ministers had no imagination to call up the picture of high-hearted men fighting for rights which they held dear.

Lord Howe went so far as to address a letter to "George Washington Esq. &c. &c.," and Washington agreed to an interview with the officer who

<sup>1</sup> Trevelyan, *American Revolution*, Part II, vol. I (New Ed., vol. II), 261.



bore it. In imposing uniform and with the stately manner, Washington, who had an instinct for effect, received the envoy. The awed messenger explained that the symbols "&c. &c." meant everything, including, of course, military titles; but Washington only said smilingly that they might mean anything, including, of course, an insult, and refused to take the letter. He referred to Congress, a body which Howe could not recognize, the grave question of the address on an envelope and Congress agreed that the recognition of his rank was necessary. There was nothing to do but to go on with the fight.

Washington's army held the city of New York, at the southerly point of Manhattan Island. The Hudson River, separating the island from the mainland of New Jersey on the west, is at its mouth two miles wide. The northern and eastern sides of the island are washed by the Harlem River, flowing out of the Hudson about a dozen miles north of the city, and broadening into the East River, about a mile wide where it separates New York from Brooklyn Heights, on Long Island. Encamped on Staten Island, on the south, General Howe could, with the aid of the fleet, land at any of half a dozen vulnerable points. Howe had the further

advantage of a much larger force. Washington had in all some twenty thousand men, numbers of them serving for short terms and therefore for the most part badly drilled. Howe had twenty-five thousand well-trained soldiers, and he could, in addition, draw men from the fleet, which would give him in all double the force of Washington.

In such a situation even the best skill of Washington was likely only to qualify defeat. He was advised to destroy New York and retire to positions more tenable. But even if he had so desired, Congress, his master, would not permit him to burn the city, and he had to make plans to defend it. Brooklyn Heights so commanded New York that enemy cannon planted there would make the city untenable. Accordingly Washington placed half his force on Long Island to defend Brooklyn Heights and in doing so made the fundamental error of cutting his army in two and dividing it by an arm of the sea in presence of overwhelming hostile naval power.

On the 22d of August Howe ferried fifteen thousand men across the Narrows to Long Island, in order to attack the position on Brooklyn Heights from the rear. Before him lay wooded hills across which led three roads converging at Brooklyn

Heights beyond the hills. On the east a fourth road led round the hills. In the dark of the night of the 26th of August Howe set his army in motion on all these roads, in order by daybreak to come to close quarters with the Americans and drive them back to the Heights. The movement succeeded perfectly. The British made terrible use of the bayonet. By the evening of the twenty-seventh the Americans, who fought well against overwhelming odds, had lost nearly two thousand men in casualties and prisoners, six field pieces, and twenty-six heavy guns. The two chief commanders, Sullivan and Stirling, were among the prisoners, and what was left of the army had been driven back to Brooklyn Heights. Howe's critics said that had he pressed the attack further he could have made certain the capture of the whole American force on Long Island.

Criticism of what might have been is easy and usually futile. It might be said of Washington, too, that he should not have kept an army so far in front of his lines behind Brooklyn Heights facing a superior enemy, and with, for a part of it, retreat possible only by a single causeway across a marsh three miles long. When he realized, on the 28th of August, what Howe had achieved, he increased the

defenders of Brooklyn Heights to ten thousand men, more than half his army. This was another cardinal error. British ships were near and but for unfavorable winds might have sailed up to Brooklyn. Washington hoped and prayed that Howe would try to carry Brooklyn Heights by assault. Then there would have been at least slaughter on the scale of Bunker Hill. But Howe had learned caution. He made no reckless attack, and soon Washington found that he must move away or face the danger of losing every man on Long Island.

On the night of the 29th of August there was clear moonlight, with fog towards daybreak. A British army of twenty-five thousand men was only some six hundred yards from the American lines. A few miles from the shore lay at anchor a great British fleet with, it is to be presumed, its patrols on the alert. Yet, during that night, ten thousand American troops were marched down to boats on the strand at Brooklyn and, with all their stores, were carried across a mile of water to New York. There must have been the splash of oars and the grating of keels, orders given in tones above a whisper, the complex sounds of moving bodies of men. It was all done under the eye of

Washington. We can picture that tall figure moving about on the strand at Brooklyn, which he was the last to leave. Not a sound disturbed the slumbers of the British. An army in retreat does not easily defend itself. Boats from the British fleet might have brought panic to the Americans in the darkness and the British army should at least have known that they were gone. By seven in the morning the ten thousand American soldiers were for the time safe in New York, and we may suppose that the two Howes were asking eager questions and wondering how it had all happened.

Washington had shown that he knew when and how to retire. Long Island was his first battle and he had lost. Now retreat was his first great tactical achievement. He could not stay in New York and so sent at once the chief part of the army, withdrawn from Brooklyn, to the line of the Harlem River at the north end of the island. He realized that his shore batteries could not keep the British fleet from sailing up both the East and the Hudson Rivers and from landing a force on Manhattan Island almost where it liked. Then the city of New York would be surrounded by a hostile fleet and a hostile army. The Howes could have performed

this maneuver as soon as they had a favorable wind. There was, we know, great confusion in New York, and Washington tells us how his heart was torn by the distress of the inhabitants. The British gave him plenty of time to make plans, and for a reason. We have seen that Lord Howe was not only an admiral to make war but also an envoy to make peace. The British victory on Long Island might, he thought, make Congress more willing to negotiate. So now he sent to Philadelphia the captured American General Sullivan, with the request that some members of Congress might confer privately on the prospects for peace.

Howe probably did not realize that the Americans had the British quality of becoming more resolute by temporary reverses. By this time, too, suspicion of every movement on the part of Great Britain had become a mania. Every one in Congress seems to have thought that Howe was planning treachery. John Adams, excepted by name from British offers of pardon, called Sullivan a "decoy duck" and, as he confessed, laughed, scolded, and grieved at any negotiation. The wish to talk privately with members of Congress was called an insulting way of avoiding recognition of that body. In spite of this, even the stalwart

Adams and the suave Franklin were willing to be members of a committee which went to meet Lord Howe. With great sorrow Howe now realized that he had no power to grant what Congress insisted upon, the recognition of independence, as a preliminary to negotiation. There was nothing for it but war.

On the 15th of September the British struck the blow too long delayed had war been their only interest. New York had to sit nearly helpless while great men-of-war passed up both the Hudson and the East River with guns sweeping the shores of Manhattan Island. At the same time General Howe sent over in boats from Long Island to the landing at Kip's Bay, near the line of the present Thirty-fourth Street, an army to cut off the city from the northern part of the island. Washington marched in person with two New England regiments to dispute the landing and give him time for evacuation. To his rage panic seized his men and they turned and fled, leaving him almost alone not a hundred yards from the enemy. A stray shot at that moment might have influenced greatly modern history, for, as events were soon to show, Washington was the mainstay of the American cause. He too had to get away and Howe's force landed easily enough.



Meanwhile, on the west shore of the island, there was an animated scene. The roads were crowded with refugees fleeing northward from New York. These civilians Howe had no reason to stop, but there marched, too, out of New York four thousand men, under Israel Putnam, who got safely away northward. Only leisurely did Howe extend his line across the island so as to cut off the city. The story, not more trustworthy than many other legends of war, is that Mrs. Murray, living in a country house near what now is Murray Hill, invited the General to luncheon, and that to enjoy this pleasure he ordered a halt for his whole force. Generals sometimes do foolish things but it is not easy to call up a picture of Howe, in the midst of a busy movement of troops, receiving the lady's invitation, accepting it, and ordering the whole army to halt while he lingered over the luncheon table. There is no doubt that his mind was still divided between making war and making peace. Probably Putnam had already got away his men, and there was no purpose in stopping the refugees in that flight from New York which so aroused the pity of Washington. As it was Howe took sixty-seven guns. By accident, or, it is said, by design of the Americans themselves, New York

soon took fire and one-third of the little city was burned.

After the fall of New York there followed a complex campaign. The resourceful Washington was now, during his first days of active warfare, pitting himself against one of the most experienced of British generals. Fleet and army were acting together. The aim of Howe was to get control of the Hudson and to meet half way the advance from Canada by way of Lake Champlain which Carleton was leading. On the 12th of October, when autumn winds were already making the nights cold, Howe moved. He did not attack Washington who lay in strength at the Harlem. That would have been to play Washington's game. Instead he put the part of his army still on Long Island in ships which then sailed through the dangerous currents of Hell Gate and landed at Throg's Neck, a peninsula on the sound across from Long Island. Washington parried this movement by so guarding the narrow neck of the peninsula leading to the mainland that the cautious Howe shrank from a frontal attack across a marsh. After a delay of six days, he again embarked his army, landed a few miles above Throg's Neck in the hope of cutting off Washington from retreat northward, only to find

Washington still north of him at White Plains. A sharp skirmish followed in which Howe lost over two hundred men and Washington only one hundred and forty. Washington, masterly in retreat, then withdrew still farther north among hills difficult of attack.

Howe had a plan which made a direct attack on Washington unnecessary. He turned southward and occupied the east shore of the Hudson River. On the 16th of November took place the worst disaster which had yet befallen American arms. Fort Washington, lying just south of the Harlem, was the only point still held on Manhattan Island by the Americans. In modern war it has become clear that fortresses supposedly strong may be only traps for their defenders. Fort Washington stood on the east bank of the Hudson opposite Fort Lee, on the west bank. These forts could not fulfil the purpose for which they were intended, of stopping British ships. Washington saw that the two forts should be abandoned. But the civilians in Congress, who, it must be remembered, named the generals and had final authority in directing the war, were reluctant to accept the loss involved in abandoning the forts and gave orders that every effort should be made to hold them. Greene, on

the whole Washington's best general, was in command of the two positions and was left to use his own judgment. On the 15th of November, by a sudden and rapid march across the island, Howe appeared before Fort Washington and summoned it to surrender on pain of the rigors of war, which meant putting the garrison to the sword should he have to take the place by storm. The answer was a defiance; and on the next day Howe attacked in overwhelming force. There was severe fighting. The casualties of the British were nearly five hundred, but they took the huge fort with its three thousand defenders and a great quantity of munitions of war. Howe's threat was not carried out. There was no massacre.

Across the river at Fort Lee the helpless Washington watched this great disaster. He had need still to look out, for Fort Lee was itself doomed. On the nineteenth Lord Cornwallis with five thousand men crossed the river five miles above Fort Lee. General Greene barely escaped with the two thousand men in the fort, leaving behind one hundred and forty cannon, stores, tools, and even the men's blankets. On the twentieth the British flag was floating over Fort Lee and Washington's whole force was in rapid flight across New Jersey, hardly

pausing until it had been ferried over the Delaware River into Pennsylvania.

Treachery, now linked to military disaster, made Washington's position terrible. Charles Lee, Horatio Gates, and Richard Montgomery were three important officers of the regular British army who fought on the American side. Montgomery had been killed at Quebec; the defects of Gates were not yet conspicuous; and Lee was next to Washington the most trusted American general. The names Washington and Lee of the twin forts on opposite sides of the Hudson show how the two generals stood in the public mind. While disaster was overtaking Washington, Lee had seven thousand men at North Castle on the east bank of the Hudson, a few miles above Fort Washington, blocking Howe's advance farther up the river. On the day after the fall of Fort Washington, Lee received positive orders to cross the Hudson at once. Three days later Fort Lee fell, and Washington repeated the order. Lee did not budge. He was safe where he was and could cross the river and get away into New Jersey when he liked. He seems deliberately to have left Washington to face complete disaster and thus prove his incompetence; then, as the undefeated general, he could take the

chief command. There is no evidence that he had intrigued with Howe, but he thought that he could be the peacemaker between Great Britain and America, with untold possibilities of ambition in that rôle. He wrote of Washington at this time, to his friend Gates, as weak and "most damnably deficient." Nemesis, however, overtook him. In the end he had to retreat across the Hudson to northern New Jersey. Here many of the people were Tories. Lee fell into a trap, was captured in bed at a tavern by a hard-riding party of British cavalry, and carried off a prisoner, obliged to bestride a horse in night gown and slippers. Not always does fate appear so just in her strokes.

In December, though the position of Washington was very bad, all was not lost. The chief aim of Howe was to secure the line of the Hudson and this he had not achieved. At Stony Point, which lies up the Hudson about fifty miles from New York, the river narrows and passes through what is almost a mountain gorge, easily defended. Here Washington had erected fortifications which made it at least difficult for a British force to pass up the river. Moreover in the highlands of northern New Jersey, with headquarters at Morristown, General Sullivan, recently exchanged, and General Gates

now had Lee's army and also the remnants of the force driven from Canada. But in retreating across New Jersey Washington had been forsaken by thousands of men, beguiled in part by the Tory population, discouraged by defeat, and in many cases with the right to go home, since their term of service had expired. All that remained of Washington's army after the forces of Sullivan and Gates joined him across the Delaware in Pennsylvania, was about four thousand men.

Howe was determined to have Philadelphia as well as New York and could place some reliance on Tory help in Pennsylvania. He had pursued Washington to the Delaware and would have pushed on across that river had not his alert foe taken care that all the boats should be on the wrong shore. As it was, Howe occupied the left bank of the Delaware with his chief post at Trenton. If he made sure of New Jersey he could go on to Philadelphia when the river was frozen over or indeed when he liked. Even the Congress had fled to Baltimore. There were British successes in other quarters. Early in December Lord Howe took the fleet to Newport. Soon he controlled the whole of Rhode Island and checked the American privateers who had made it their base. The brothers issued



proclamations offering protection to all who should within sixty days return to their British allegiance and many people of high standing in New York and New Jersey accepted the offer. Howe wrote home to England the glad news of victory. Philadelphia would probably fall before spring and it looked as if the war was really over.

In this darkest hour Washington struck a blow which changed the whole situation. We associate with him the thought of calm deliberation. Now, however, was he to show his strongest quality as a general to be audacity. At the Battle of the Marne, in 1914, the French General Foch sent the despatch: "My center is giving way; my right is retreating; the situation is excellent: I am attacking." Washington's position seemed as nearly hopeless and he, too, had need of some striking action. A campaign marked by his own blundering and by the treachery of a trusted general had ended in seeming ruin. Pennsylvania at his back and New Jersey before him across the Delaware were less than half loyal to the American cause and probably willing to accept peace on almost any terms. Never was a general in a position where greater risks must be taken for salvation. As Washington pondered what was going on among the British

across the Delaware, a bold plan outlined itself in his mind. Howe, he knew, had gone to New York to celebrate a triumphant Christmas. His absence from the front was certain to involve slackness. It was Germans who held the line of the Delaware, some thirteen hundred of them under Colonel Rahl at Trenton, two thousand under Von Donop farther down the river at Bordentown; and with Germans perhaps more than any other people Christmas is a season of elaborate festivity. On this their first Christmas away from home many of the Germans would be likely to be off their guard either through homesickness or dissipation. They cared nothing for either side. There had been much plundering in New Jersey and discipline was relaxed.

Howe had been guilty of the folly of making strong the posts farthest from the enemy and weak those nearest to him. He had, indeed, ordered Rahl to throw up redoubts for the defense of Trenton, but this, as Washington well knew, had not been done for Rahl despised his enemy and spoke of the American army as already lost. Washington's bold plan was to recross the Delaware and attack Trenton. There were to be three crossings. One was to be against Von Donop at Bordentown

below Trenton, the second at Trenton itself. These two attacks were designed to prevent aid to Trenton. The third force with which Washington himself went was to cross the river some nine miles above the town.

Christmas Day, 1776, was dismally cold. There was a driving storm of sleet and the broad swollen stream of the Delaware, dotted with dark masses of floating ice, offered a chill prospect. To take an army with its guns across that threatening flood was indeed perilous. Gates and other generals declared that the scheme was too difficult to be carried out. Only one of the three forces crossed the river. Washington, with iron will, was not to be turned from his purpose. He had skilled boatmen from New England. The crossing took no less than ten hours and a great part of it was done in wintry darkness. When the army landed on the New Jersey shore it had a march of nine miles in sleet and rain in order to reach Trenton by day-break. It is said that some of the men marched barefoot leaving tracks of blood in the snow. The arms of some were lost and those of others were wet and useless but Washington told them that they must depend the more on the bayonet. He attacked Trenton in broad daylight. There was a sharp fight.

Rahl, the commander, and some seventy men, were killed and a thousand men surrendered.

Even now Washington's position was dangerous. Von Donop, with two thousand men, lay only a few miles down the river. Had he marched at once on Trenton, as he should have done, the worn out little force of Washington might have met with disaster. What Von Donop did when the alarm reached him was to retreat as fast as he could to Princeton, a dozen miles to the rear towards New York, leaving behind his sick and all his heavy equipment. Meanwhile Washington, knowing his danger, had turned back across the Delaware with a prisoner for every two of his men. When, however, he saw what Von Donop had done he returned on the twenty-ninth to Trenton, sent out scouting parties, and roused the country so that in every bit of forest along the road to Princeton there were men, dead shots, to make difficult a British advance to retake Trenton.

The reverse had brought consternation at New York. Lord Cornwallis was about to embark for England, the bearer of news of overwhelming victory. Now, instead, he was sent to drive back Washington. It was no easy task for Cornwallis to reach Trenton, for Washington's scouting

parties and a force of six hundred men under Greene were on the road to harass him. On the evening of the 2d of January, however, he reoccupied Trenton. This time Washington had not recrossed the Delaware but had retreated southward and was now entrenched on the southern bank of the little river Assanpink, which flows into the Delaware. Reinforcements were following Cornwallis. That night he sharply cannonaded Washington's position and was as sharply answered. He intended to attack in force in the morning. To the skill and resource of Washington he paid the compliment of saying that at last he had run down the "Old Fox."

Then followed a maneuver which, years after, Cornwallis, a generous foe, told Washington was one of the most surprising and brilliant in the history of war. There was another "old fox" in Europe, Frederick the Great, of Prussia, who knew war if ever man knew it, and he, too, from this movement ranked Washington among the great generals. The maneuver was simple enough. Instead of taking the obvious course of again retreating across the Delaware Washington decided to advance, to get in behind Cornwallis, to try to cut his communications, to threaten the British base

of supply and then, if a superior force came up, to retreat into the highlands of New Jersey. There he could keep an unbroken line as far east as the Hudson, menace the British in New Jersey, and probably force them to withdraw to the safety of New York.

All through the night of January 2, 1777, Washington's camp fires burned brightly and the British outposts could hear the sound of voices and of the spade and pickaxe busy in throwing up entrenchments. The fires died down towards morning and the British awoke to find the enemy camp deserted. Washington had carried his whole army by a roundabout route to the Princeton road and now stood between Cornwallis and his base. There was some sharp fighting that day near Princeton. Washington had to defeat and get past the reinforcements coming to Cornwallis. He reached Princeton and then slipped away northward and made his headquarters at Morristown. He had achieved his purpose. The British with Washington entrenched on their flank were not safe in New Jersey. The only thing to do was to withdraw to New York. By his brilliant advance Washington recovered the whole of New Jersey with the exception of some minor positions near the sea. He had

changed the face of the war. In London there was momentary rejoicing over Howe's recent victories, but it was soon followed by distressing news of defeat. Through all the colonies ran inspiring tidings. There had been doubts whether, after all, Washington was the heaven-sent leader. Now both America and Europe learned to recognize his skill. He had won a reputation, though not yet had he saved a cause.



## CHAPTER V

### THE LOSS OF PHILADELPHIA

THOUGH the outlook for Washington was brightened by his success in New Jersey, it was still depressing enough. The British had taken New York, they could probably take Philadelphia when they liked, and no place near the seacoast was safe. According to the votes in Parliament, by the spring of 1777 Britain was to have an army of eighty-nine thousand men, of whom fifty-seven thousand were intended for colonial garrisons and for the prosecution of the war in America. These numbers were in fact never reached, but the army of forty thousand in America was formidable compared with Washington's forces. The British were not hampered by the practice of enlisting men for only a few months, which marred so much of Washington's effort. Above all they had money and adequate resources. In a word they had the things which Washington lacked during almost the whole of the war.

Washington called his success in the attack at Trenton a lucky stroke. It was luck which had far-reaching consequences. Howe had the fixed idea that to follow the capture of New York by that of Philadelphia, the most populous city in America, and the seat of Congress, would mean great glory for himself and a crushing blow to the American cause. If to this could be added, as he intended, the occupation of the whole valley of the Hudson, the year 1777 might well see the end of the war. An acute sense of the value of time is vital in war. Promptness, the quick surprise of the enemy, was perhaps the chief military virtue of Washington; dilatoriness was the destructive vice of Howe. He had so little contempt for his foe that he practised a blighting caution. On April 12, 1777, Washington, in view of his own depleted force, in a state of half famine, wrote: "If Howe does not take advantage of our weak state he is very unfit for his trust." Howe remained inactive and time, thus despised, worked its due revenge. Later Howe did move, and with skill, but he missed the rapid combination in action which was the first condition of final success. He could have captured Philadelphia in May. He took the city, but not until September, when to hold it had become a liability and not

an asset. To go there at all was perhaps unwise; to go in September was for him a tragic mistake.

From New York to Philadelphia the distance by land is about a hundred miles. The route lay across New Jersey, that "garden of America" which English travelers spoke of as resembling their own highly cultivated land. Washington had his headquarters at Morristown, in northern New Jersey. His resources were at a low ebb. He had always the faith that a cause founded on justice could not fail; but his letters at this time are full of depressing anxiety. Each State regarded itself as in danger and made care of its own interests its chief concern. By this time Congress had lost most of the able men who had given it dignity and authority. Like Howe it had slight sense of the value of time and imagined that tomorrow was as good as today. Wellington once complained that, though in supreme command, he had not authority to appoint even a corporal. Washington was hampered both by Congress and by the State Governments in choosing leaders. He had some officers, such as Greene, Knox, and Benedict Arnold, whom he trusted. Others, like Gates and Conway, were ceaseless intriguers. To General Sullivan, who fancied himself constantly

slighted and ill-treated, Washington wrote sharply to abolish his poisonous suspicions.

Howe had offered easy terms to those in New Jersey who should declare their loyalty and to meet this Washington advised the stern policy of outlawing every one who would not take the oath of allegiance to the United States. There was much fluttering of heart on the New Jersey farms, much anxious trimming in order, in any event, to be safe. Howe's Hessians had plundered ruthlessly causing deep resentment against the British. Now Washington found his own people doing the same thing. Militia officers, themselves, "generally" as he said, "of the lowest class of the people," not only stole but incited their men to steal. It was easy to plunder under the plea that the owner of the property was a Tory, whether open or concealed, and Washington wrote that the waste and theft were "beyond all conception." There were shirkers claiming exemption from military service on the ground that they were doing necessary service as civilians. Washington needed maps to plan his intricate movements and could not get them. Smallpox was devastating his army and causing losses heavier than those from the enemy. When pay day came there was usually no money.

It is little wonder that in this spring of 1777 he feared that his army might suddenly dissolve and leave him without a command. In that case he would not have yielded. Rather, so stern and bitter was he against England, would he have plunged into the western wilderness to be lost in its vast spaces.

Howe had his own perplexities. He knew that a great expedition under Burgoyne was to advance from Canada southward to the Hudson. Was he to remain with his whole force at New York until the time should come to push up the river to meet Burgoyne? He had a copy of the instructions given in England to Burgoyne by Lord George Germain, but he was himself without orders. Afterwards the reason became known. Lord George Germain had dictated the order to coöperate with Burgoyne, but had hurried off to the country before it was ready for his signature and it had been mislaid. Howe seemed free to make his own plans and he longed to be master of the enemy's capital. In the end he decided to take Philadelphia — a task easy enough, as the event proved. At Howe's elbow was the traitorous American general, Charles Lee, whom he had recently captured, and Lee, as we know, told him

that Maryland and Pennsylvania were at heart loyal to the King and panting to be free from the tyranny of the demagogue. Once firmly in the capital Howe believed that he would have secure control of Maryland, Pennsylvania, and New Jersey. He could achieve this and be back at New York in time to meet Burgoyne, perhaps at Albany. Then he would hold the colony of New York from Staten Island to the Canadian frontier. Howe found that he could send ships up the Hudson, and the American army had to stand on the banks almost helpless against the mobility of sea power. Washington's left wing rested on the Hudson and he held both banks but neither at Peekskill nor, as yet, farther up at West Point, could his forts prevent the passage of ships. It was a different matter for the British to advance on land. But the ships went up and down in the spring of 1777. It would be easy enough to help Burgoyne when the time should come.

It was summer before Howe was ready to move, and by that time he had received instructions that his first aim must be to coöperate with Burgoyne. First, however, he was resolved to have Philadelphia. Washington watched Howe in perplexity. A great fleet and a great army lay at New York.

Why did they not move? Washington knew perfectly well what he himself would have done in Howe's place. He would have attacked rapidly in April the weak American army and, after destroying or dispersing it, would have turned to meet Burgoyne coming southward from Canada. Howe did send a strong force into New Jersey. But he did not know how weak Washington really was, for that master of craft in war disseminated with great skill false information as to his own supposed overwhelming strength. Howe had been bitten once by advancing too far into New Jersey and was not going to take risks. He tried to entice Washington from the hills to attack in open country. He marched here and there in New Jersey and kept Washington alarmed and exhausted by counter marches, and always puzzled as to what the next move should be. Howe purposely let one of his secret messengers be taken bearing a despatch saying that the fleet was about to sail for Boston. All these things took time and the summer was slipping away. In the end Washington realized that Howe intended to make his move not by land but by sea. Could it be possible that he was not going to make aid to Burgoyne his chief purpose? Could it be that he would attack Boston? Washington



hoped so for he knew the reception certain at Boston. Or was his goal Charleston? On the 23d of July, when the summer was more than half gone, Washington began to see more clearly. On that day Howe had embarked eighteen thousand men and the fleet put to sea from Staten Island.

Howe was doing what able officers with him, such as Cornwallis, Grey, and the German Knyp-hausen, appear to have been unanimous in thinking he should not do. He was misled not only by the desire to strike at the very center of the rebellion, but also by the assurance of the traitorous Lee that to take Philadelphia would be the effective signal to all the American Loyalists, the overwhelming majority of the people, as was believed, that sedition had failed. A tender parent, the King, was ready to have the colonies back in their former relation and to give them secure guarantees of future liberty. Any one who saw the fleet put out from New York Harbor must have been impressed with the might of Britain. No less than two hundred and twenty-nine ships set their sails and covered the sea for miles. When they had disappeared out of sight of the New Jersey shore their goal was still unknown. At sea they might turn in any direction. Washington's uncertainty

was partly relieved on the 30th of July when the fleet appeared at the entrance of Delaware Bay, with Philadelphia some hundred miles away across the bay and up the Delaware River. After hovering about the Cape for a day the fleet again put to sea, and Washington, who had marched his army so as to be near Philadelphia, thought the whole movement a feint and knew not where the fleet would next appear. He was preparing to march to New York to menace General Clinton, who had there seven thousand men able to help Burgoyne when he heard good news. On the 22d of August he knew that Howe had really gone southward and was in Chesapeake Bay. Boston was now certainly safe. On the 25th of August, after three stormy weeks at sea, Howe arrived at Elkton, at the head of Chesapeake Bay, and there landed his army. It was Philadelphia fifty miles away that he intended to have. Washington wrote gleefully: "Now let all New England turn out and crush Burgoyne." Before the end of September he was writing that he was certain of complete disaster to Burgoyne.

Howe had, in truth, made a ruinous mistake. Had the date been May instead of August he might still have saved Burgoyne. But at the end of

August, when the net was closing on Burgoyne, Howe was three hundred miles away. His disregard of time and distance had been magnificent. In July he had sailed to the mouth of the Delaware, with Philadelphia near, but he had then sailed away again, and why? Because the passage of his ships up the river to the city was blocked by obstructions commanded by bristling forts. The naval officers said truly that the fleet could not get up the river. But Howe might have landed his army at the head of Delaware Bay. It is a dozen miles across the narrow peninsula from the head of Delaware Bay to that of Chesapeake Bay. Since Howe had decided to attack from the head of Chesapeake Bay there was little to prevent him from landing his army on the Delaware side of the peninsula and marching across it. By sea it is a voyage of three hundred miles round a peninsula one hundred and fifty miles long to get from one of these points to the other, by land only a dozen miles away. Howe made the sea voyage and spent on it three weeks when a march of a day would have saved this time and kept his fleet three hundred miles by sea nearer to New York and aid for Burgoyne.

Howe's mistakes only have their place in the procession to inevitable disaster. Once in the thick

of fighting he showed himself formidable. When he had landed at Elkton he was fifty miles southwest of Philadelphia and between him and that place was Washington with his army. Washington was determined to delay Howe in every possible way. To get to Philadelphia Howe had to cross the Brandywine River. Time was nothing to him. He landed at Elkton on the 25th of August. Not until the 10th of September was he prepared to attack Washington barring his way at Chadd's Ford. Washington was in a strong position on a front of two miles on the river. At his left, below Chadd's Ford, the Brandywine is a torrent flowing between high cliffs. There the British would find no passage. On his right was a forest. Washington had chosen his position with his usual skill. Entrenchments protected his front and batteries would sweep down an advancing enemy. He had probably not more than eleven thousand men in the fight and it is doubtful whether Howe brought up a greater number so that the armies were not unevenly matched. At daybreak on the eleventh the British army broke camp at the village of Kenneth Square, four miles from Chadd's Ford, and, under General Knyphausen, marched straight to make a frontal attack on Washington's position.

In the battle which followed Washington was beaten by the superior tactics of his enemy. Not all of the British army was there in the attack at Chadd's Ford. A column under Cornwallis had filed off by a road to the left and was making a long and rapid march. The plan was to cross the Brandywine some ten miles above where Washington was posted and to attack him in the rear. By two o'clock in the afternoon Cornwallis had forced the two branches of the upper Brandywine and was marching on Dilworth at the right rear of the American army. Only then did Washington become aware of his danger. His first impulse was to advance across Chadd's Ford to try to overwhelm Knyphausen and thus to get between Howe and the fleet at Elkton. This might, however, have brought disaster and he soon decided to retire. His movement was ably carried out. Both sides suffered in the woodland fighting but that night the British army encamped in Washington's position at Chadd's Ford, and Howe had fought skillfully and won an important battle.

Washington had retired in good order and was still formidable. He now realized clearly enough that Philadelphia would fall. Delay, however, would be nearly as good as victory. He saw what

Howe could not see, that menacing cloud in the north, much bigger than a man's hand, which, with Howe far away, should break in a final storm terrible for the British cause. Meanwhile Washington meant to keep Howe occupied. Rain alone prevented another battle before the British reached the Schuylkill River. On that river Washington guarded every ford. But, in the end, by skillful maneuvering, Howe was able to cross and on the 26th of September he occupied Philadelphia without resistance. The people were ordered to remain quietly in their houses. Officers were billeted on the wealthier inhabitants. The fall resounded far of what Lord Adam Gordon called a "great and noble city," "the first Town in America," "one of the Wonders of the World." Its luxury had been so conspicuous that the austere John Adams condemned the "sinful feasts" in which he shared. About it were fine country seats surrounded by parklike grounds, with noble trees, clipped hedges, and beautiful gardens. The British believed that Pennsylvania was really on their side. Many of the people were friendly and hundreds now renewed their oath of allegiance to the King. Washington complained that the people gave Howe information denied to him. They certainly fed

Howe's army willingly and received good British gold while Washington had only paper money with which to pay. Over the proud capital floated once more the British flag and people who did not see very far said that, with both New York and Philadelphia taken, the rebellion had at last collapsed.

Once in possession of Philadelphia Howe made his camp at Germantown, a straggling suburban village, about seven miles northwest of the city. Washington's army lay at the foot of some hills a dozen miles farther away. Howe had need to be wary, for Washington was the same "old fox" who had played so cunning a game at Trenton. The efforts of the British army were now centered on clearing the river Delaware so that supplies might be brought up rapidly by water instead of being carried fifty miles overland from Chesapeake Bay. Howe detached some thousands of men for this work and there was sharp fighting before the troops and the fleet combined had cleared the river. At Germantown Howe kept about nine thousand men. Though he knew that Washington was likely to attack him he did not entrench his army as he desired the attack to be made. It might well have succeeded. Washington with eleven thousand men aimed at a surprise. On the evening of the 3d of



October he set out from his camp. Four roads led into Germantown and all these the Americans used. At sunrise on the fourth, just as the attack began, a fog arose to embarrass both sides. Lying a little north of the village was the solid stone house of Chief Justice Chew, and it remains famous as the central point in the bitter fight of that day. What brought final failure to the American attack was an accident of maneuvering. Sullivan's brigade was in front attacking the British when Greene's came up for the same purpose. His line overlapped Sullivan's and he mistook in the fog Sullivan's men for the enemy and fired on them from the rear. A panic naturally resulted among the men who were attacked also at the same time by the British on their front. The disorder spread. British reinforcements arrived, and Washington drew off his army in surprising order considering the panic. He had six hundred and seventy-three casualties and lost besides four hundred prisoners. The British loss was five hundred and thirty-seven casualties and fourteen prisoners. The attack had failed, but news soon came which made the reverse unimportant. Burgoyne and his whole army had surrendered at Saratoga.

## CHAPTER VI

### THE FIRST GREAT BRITISH DISASTER

JOHN BURGOYNE, in a measure a soldier of fortune, was the younger son of an impoverished baronet, but he had married the daughter of the powerful Earl of Derby and was well known in London society as a man of fashion and also as a man of letters, whose plays had a certain vogue. His will, in which he describes himself as a humble Christian, who, in spite of many faults, had never forgotten God, shows that he was serious minded. He sat in the House of Commons for Preston and, though he used the language of a courtier and spoke of himself as lying at the King's feet to await his commands, he was a Whig, the friend of Fox and others whom the King regarded as his enemies. One of his plays describes the difficulties of getting the English to join the army of George III. We have the smartly dressed recruit as a decoy to suggest an easy life in the army. Victory and glory are so

certain that a tailor stands with his feet on the neck of the King of France. The decks of captured ships swim with punch and are clotted with gold dust, and happy soldiers play with diamonds as if they were marbles. The senators of England, says Burgoyne, care chiefly to make sure of good game laws for their own pleasure. The worthless son of one of them, who sets out on the long drive to his father's seat in the country, spends an hour in "yawning, picking his teeth and damning his journey" and when once on the way drives with such fury that the route is marked by "yelping dogs, broken-backed pigs and dismembered geese."

It was under this playwright and satirist, who had some skill as a soldier, that the British cause now received a blow from which it never recovered. Burgoyne had taken part in driving the Americans from Canada in 1776 and had spent the following winter in England using his influence to secure an independent command. To his later undoing he succeeded. It was he, and not, as had been expected, General Carleton, who was appointed to lead the expedition of 1777 from Canada to the Hudson. Burgoyne was given instructions so rigid as to be an insult to his intelligence. He was to de

one thing and only one thing, to press forward to the Hudson and meet Howe. At the same time Lord George Germain, the minister responsible, failed to instruct Howe to advance up the Hudson to meet Burgoyne. Burgoyne had a genuine belief in the wisdom of this strategy but he had no power to vary it, to meet changing circumstances, and this was one chief factor in his failure.

Behold Burgoyne then, on the 17th of June, embarking on Lake Champlain the army which, ever since his arrival in Canada on the 6th of May, he had been preparing for this advance. He had rather more than seven thousand men, of whom nearly one-half were Germans under the competent General Riedesel. In the force of Burgoyne we find the ominous presence of some hundreds of Indian allies. They had been attached to one side or the other in every war fought in those regions during the previous one hundred and fifty years. In the war which ended in 1763 Montcalm had used them and so had his opponent Amherst. The regiments from the New England and other colonies had fought in alliance with the painted and befeathered savages and had made no protest. Now either times had changed, or there was something in a civil war which made the use of savages

seem hideous. One thing is certain. Amherst had held his savages in stern restraint and could say proudly that they had not committed a single outrage. Burgoyne was not so happy.

In nearly every war the professional soldier shows distrust, if not contempt, for civilian levies. Burgoyne had been in America before the day of Bunker Hill and knew a great deal about the country. He thought the "insurgents" good enough fighters when protected by trees and stones and swampy ground. But he thought, too, that they had no real knowledge of the science of war and could not fight a pitched battle. He himself had not shown the prevision required by sound military knowledge. If the British were going to abandon the advantage of sea power and fight where they could not fall back on their fleet, they needed to pay special attention to land transport. This Burgoyne had not done. It was only a little more than a week before he reached Lake Champlain that he asked Carleton to provide the four hundred horses and five hundred carts which he still needed and which were not easily secured in a sparsely settled country. Burgoyne lingered for three days at Crown Point, half way down the lake. Then, on the 2d of July, he laid siege to Fort Ticonderoga.

Once past this fort, guarding the route to Lake George, he could easily reach the Hudson.

In command at Fort Ticonderoga was General St. Clair, with about thirty-five hundred men. He had long notice of the siege, for the expedition of Burgoyne had been the open talk of Montreal and the surrounding country during many months. He had built Fort Independence, on the east shore of Lake Champlain, and with a great expenditure of labor had sunk twenty-two piers across the lake and stretched in front of them a boom to protect the two forts. But he had neglected to defend Sugar Hill in front of Fort Ticonderoga, and commanding the American works. It took only three or four days for the British to drag cannon to the top, erect a battery and prepare to open fire. On the 5th of July, St. Clair had to face a bitter necessity. He abandoned the untenable forts and retired southward to Fort Edward by way of the difficult Green Mountains. The British took one hundred and twenty-eight guns.

These successes led the British to think that within a few days they would be in Albany. We have an amusing picture of the effect on George III of the fall of Fort Ticonderoga. The place had been much discussed. It had been the first British

fort to fall to the Americans when the Revolution began, and Carleton's failure to take it in the autumn of 1776 had been the cause of acute heart-burning in London. Now, when the news of its fall reached England, George III burst into the Queen's room with the glad cry, "I have beat them, I have beat the Americans." Washington's depression was not as great as the King's elation; he had a better sense of values; but he had intended that the fort should hold Burgoyne, and its fall was a disastrous blow. The Americans showed skill and good soldierly quality in the retreat from Ticonderoga, and Burgoyne in following and harassing them was led into hard fighting in the woods. The easier route by way of Lake George was open but Burgoyne hoped to destroy his enemy by direct pursuit through the forest. It took him twenty days to hew his way twenty miles, to the upper waters of the Hudson near Fort Edward. When there on the 30th of July he had communications open from the Hudson to the St. Lawrence.

Fortune seemed to smile on Burgoyne. He had taken many guns and he had proved the fighting quality of his men. But his cheerful elation had, in truth, no sound basis. Never during the two



and a half months of bitter struggle which followed was he able to advance more than twenty-five miles from Fort Edward. The moment he needed transport by land he found himself almost helpless. Sometimes his men were without food and equipment because he had not the horses and carts to bring supplies from the head of water at Fort Anne or Fort George, a score of miles away. Sometimes he had no food to transport. He was dependent on his communications for every form of supplies. Even hay had to be brought from Canada, since, in the forest country, there was little food for his horses. The perennial problem for the British in all operations was this one of food. The inland regions were too sparsely populated to make it possible for more than a few soldiers to live on local supplies. The wheat for the bread of the British soldier, his beef and his pork, even the oats for his horse, came, for the most part, from England, at vast expense for transport, which made fortunes for contractors. It is said that the cost of a pound of salted meat delivered to Burgoyne on the Hudson was thirty shillings. Burgoyne had been told that the inhabitants needed only protection to make them openly loyal and had counted on them for supplies. He found instead

the great mass of the people hostile and he doubted the sincerity even of those who professed their loyalty.

After Burgoyne had been a month at Fort Edward he was face to face with starvation. If he advanced he lengthened his line to flank attack. As it was he had difficulty in holding it against New Englanders, the most resolute of all his foes, eager to assert by hard fighting, if need be, their right to hold the invaded territory which was claimed also by New York. Burgoyne's instructions forbade him to turn aside and strike them a heavy blow. He must go on to meet Howe who was not there to be met. A being who could see the movements of men as we watch a game of chess, might think that madness had seized the British leaders; Burgoyne on the upper Hudson plunging forward resolutely to meet Howe; Howe at sea sailing away, as it might well seem, to get as far from Burgoyne as he could; Clinton in command at New York without instructions, puzzled what to do and not hearing from his leader, Howe, for six weeks at a time; and across the sea a complacent minister, Germain, who believed that he knew what to do in a scene three thousand miles away, and had drawn up exact instructions as to the way

of doing it, and who was now eagerly awaiting news of the final triumph.

Burgoyne did his best. Early in August he had to make a venturesome stroke to get sorely needed food. Some twenty-five miles east of the Hudson at Bennington, in difficult country, New England militia had gathered food and munitions, and horses for transport. The pressure of need clouded Burgoyne's judgment. To make a dash for Bennington meant a long and dangerous march. He was assured, however, that a surprise was possible and that in any case the country was full of friends only awaiting a little encouragement to come out openly on his side. They were Germans who lay on Burgoyne's left and Burgoyne sent Colonel Baum, an efficient officer, with five or six hundred men to attack the New Englanders and bring in the supplies. It was a stupid blunder to send Germans among a people specially incensed against the use of these mercenaries. There was no surprise. Many professing loyalists, seemingly eager to take the oath of allegiance, met and delayed Baum. When near Bennington he found in front of him a force barring the way and had to make a carefully guarded camp for the night. Then five hundred men, some of them the cheerful takers of the oath

of allegiance, slipped round to his rear and in the morning he was attacked from front and rear.

A hot fight followed which resulted in the complete defeat of the British. Baum was mortally wounded. Some of his men escaped into the woods; the rest were killed or captured. Nor was this all. Burgoyne, scenting danger, had ordered five hundred more Germans to reinforce Baum. They, too, were attacked and overwhelmed. In all Burgoyne lost some eight hundred men and four guns. The American loss was seventy. It shows the spirit of the time that, for the sport of the soldiers, British prisoners were tied together in pairs and driven by negroes at the tail of horses. An American soldier described long after, with regret for his own cruelty, how he had taken a British prisoner who had had his left eye shot out and mounted him on a horse also without the left eye, in derision at the captive's misfortune. The British complained that quarter was refused in the fight. For days tired stragglers, after long wandering in the woods, drifted into Burgoyne's camp. This was now near Saratoga, a name destined to be ominous in the history of the British army.

Further misfortune now crowded upon Burgoyne. The general of that day had two favorite

forms of attack. One was to hold the enemy's front and throw out a column to march round the flank and attack his rear, the method of Howe at the Brandywine; the other method was to advance on the enemy by lines converging at a common center. This form of attack had proved most successful eighteen years earlier when the British had finally secured Canada by bringing together, at Montreal, three armies, one from the east, one from the west, and one from the south. Now there was a similar plan of bringing together three British forces at or near Albany, on the Hudson. Of Clinton, at New York, and Burgoyne we know. The third force was under General St. Leger. With some seventeen hundred men, fully half of whom were Indians, he had gone up the St. Lawrence from Montreal and was advancing from Oswego on Lake Ontario to attack Fort Stanwix at the end of the road from the Great Lakes to the Mohawk River. After taking that stronghold he intended to go down the river valley to meet Burgoyne near Albany.

On the 3d of August St. Leger was before Fort Stanwix garrisoned by some seven hundred Americans. With him were two men deemed potent in that scene. One of these was Sir John Johnson

who had recently inherited the vast estate in the neighborhood of his father, the great Indian Superintendent, Sir William Johnson, and was now in command of a regiment recruited from Loyalists, many of them fierce and embittered because of the seizure of their property. The other leader was a famous chief of the Mohawks, Thayendanegea, or, to give him his English name, Joseph Brant, half savage still, but also half civilized and half educated, because he had had a careful schooling and for a brief day had been courted by London fashion. He exerted a formidable influence with his own people. The Indians were not, however, all on one side. Half of the six tribes of the Iroquois were either neutral or in sympathy with the Americans. Among the savages, as among the civilized, the war was a family quarrel, in which brother fought brother. Most of the Indians on the American side preserved, indeed, an outward neutrality. There was no hostile population for them to plunder and the Indian usually had no stomach for any other kind of warfare. The allies of the British, on the other hand, had plenty of openings to their taste and they brought on the British cause an enduring discredit.

When St. Leger was before Fort Stanwix he

heard that a force of eight hundred men, led by a German settler named Herkimer, was coming up against him. When it was at Oriskany, about six miles away, St. Leger laid a trap. He sent Brant with some hundreds of Indians and a few soldiers to be concealed in a marshy ravine which Herkimer must cross. When the American force was hemmed in by trees and marsh on the narrow causeway of logs running across the ravine the Indians attacked with wild yells and murderous fire. Then followed a bloody hand to hand fight. Tradition has been busy with its horrors. Men struggled in slime and blood and shouted curses and defiance. Improbable stories are told of pairs of skeletons found afterwards in the bog each with a bony hand which had driven a knife to the heart of the other. In the end the British, met by resolution so fierce, drew back. Meanwhile a sortie from the American fort on their rear had a menacing success. Sir John Johnson's camp was taken and sacked. The two sides were at last glad to separate, after the most bloody struggle in the whole war. St. Leger's Indians had had more than enough. About a hundred had been killed and the rest were in a state of mutiny. Soon it was known that Benedict Arnold, with a considerable force,



was pushing up the Mohawk Valley to relieve the American fort. Arnold knew how to deal with savages. He took care that his friendly Indians should come into contact with those of Brant and tell lurid tales of utter disaster to Burgoyne and of a great avenging army on the march to attack St. Leger. The result was that St. Leger's Indians broke out in riot and maddened themselves with stolen rum. Disorder affected even the soldiers. The only thing for St. Leger to do was to get away. He abandoned his guns and stores and, harassed now by his former Indian allies, made his way to Oswego and in the end reached Montreal with a remnant of his force.

News of these things came to Burgoyne just after the disaster at Bennington. Since Fort Stanwix was in a country counted upon as Loyalist at heart it was especially discouraging again to find that in the main the population was against the British. During the war almost without exception Loyalist opinion proved weak against the fierce determination of the American side. It was partly a matter of organization. The vigilance committees in each State made life well-nigh intolerable to suspected Tories. Above all, however, the British had to bear the odium which attaches always to

the invader. We do not know what an American army would have done if, with Iroquois savages as allies, it had made war in an English county. We know what loathing a parallel situation aroused against the British army in America. The Indians, it should be noted, were not soldiers under British discipline but allies; the chiefs regarded themselves as equals who must be consulted and not as enlisted to take orders from a British general.

In war, as in politics, nice balancing of merit or defect in an enemy would destroy the main purpose which is to defeat him. Each side exaggerates any weak point in the other in order to stimulate the fighting passions. Judgment is distorted. The Baroness Riedesel, the wife of one of Burgoyne's generals, who was in Boston in 1777, says that the people were all dressed alike in a peasant costume with a leather strap round the waist, that they were of very low and insignificant stature, and that only one in ten of them could read or write. She pictures New Englanders as tarring and feathering cultivated English ladies. When educated people believed every evil of the enemy the ignorant had no restraint to their credulity. New England had long regarded the native savages as a pest. In 1776 New Hampshire offered seventy pounds for

each scalp of a hostile male Indian and thirty-seven pounds and ten shillings for each scalp of a woman or of a child under twelve years of age. Now it was reported that the British were offering bounties for American scalps. Benjamin Franklin satirized British ignorance when he described whales leaping Niagara Falls and he did not expect to be taken seriously when, at a later date, he pictured George III as gloating over the scalps of his subjects in America. The Seneca Indians alone, wrote Franklin, sent to the King many bales of scalps. Some bales were captured by the Americans and they found the scalps of 43 soldiers, 297 farmers, some of them burned alive, and 67 old people, 88 women, 193 boys, 211 girls, 29 infants, and others unclassified. Exact figures bring conviction. Franklin was not wanting in exactness nor did he fail, albeit it was unwittingly, to intensify burning resentment of which we have echoes still. Burgoyne had to bear the odium of the outrages by Indians. It is amusing to us, though it was hardly so to this kindly man, to find these words put into his mouth by a colonial poet:

I will let loose the dogs of Hell,  
Ten thousand Indians who shall yell,  
And foam, and tear, and grin, and roar

And drench their moccasins in gore: . . .  
I swear, by St. George and St. Paul,  
I will exterminate you all.

Such seed, falling on soil prepared by the hate of war, brought forth its deadly fruit. The Americans believed that there was no brutality from which British officers would shrink. Burgoyne had told his Indian allies that they must not kill except in actual fighting and that there must be no slaughter of non-combatants and no scalping of any but the dead. The warning delivered him into the hands of his enemies for it showed that he half expected outrage. Members of the British House of Commons were no whit behind the Americans in attacking him. Burke amused the House by his satire on Burgoyne's words: "My gentle lions, my humane bears, my tender-hearted hyenas, go forth! But I exhort you, as you are Christians and members of civilized society, to take care not to hurt any man, woman, or child." Burke's great speech lasted for three and a half hours and Sir George Savile called it "the greatest triumph of eloquence within memory." British officers disliked their dirty, greasy, noisy allies and Burgoyne found his use of savages, with the futile order to be merciful, a potent factor in his defeat.

A horrifying incident had occurred while he was fighting his way to the Hudson. As the Americans were preparing to leave Fort Edward some marauding Indians saw a chance of plunder and outrage. They burst into a house and carried off two ladies, both of them British in sympathy — Mrs. McNeil, a cousin of one of Burgoyne's chief officers, General Fraser, and Miss Jeannie McCrae, whose betrothed, a Mr. Jones, and whose brother were serving with Burgoyne. In a short time Mrs. McNeil was handed over unhurt to Burgoyne's advancing army. Miss McCrae was never again seen alive by her friends. Her body was found and a Wyandot chief, known as the Panther, showed her scalp as a trophy. Burgoyne would have been a poor creature had he not shown anger at such a crime, even if committed against the enemy. This crime, however, was committed against his own friends. He pressed the charge against the chief and was prepared to hang him and only relaxed when it was urged that the execution would cause all his Indians to leave him and to commit further outrages. The incident was appealing in its tragedy and stirred the deep anger of the population of the surrounding country among whose descendants to this day the tradition of the

abandoned brutality of the British keeps alive the old hatred.

At Fort Edward Burgoyne now found that he could hardly move. He was encumbered by an enormous baggage train. His own effects filled, it is said, thirty wagons and this we can believe when we find that champagne was served at his table up almost to the day of final disaster. The population was thoroughly aroused against him. His own instinct was to remain near the water route to Canada and make sure of his communications. On the other hand, honor called him to go forward and not fail Howe, supposed to be advancing to meet him. For a long time he waited and hesitated. Meanwhile he was having increasing difficulty in feeding his army and through sickness and desertion his numbers were declining. By the 13th of September he had taken a decisive step. He made a bridge of boats and moved his whole force across the river to Saratoga, now Schuylerville. This crossing of the river would result inevitably in cutting off his communications with Lake George and Ticonderoga. After such a step he could not go back and he was moving forward into a dark unknown. The American camp was at Stillwater, twelve miles farther down the river. Burgoyne

sent messenger after messenger to get past the American lines and bring back news of Howe. Not one of these unfortunate spies returned. Most of them were caught and ignominiously hanged. One thing, however, Burgoyne could do. He could hazard a fight and on this he decided as the autumn was closing in.

Burgoyne had no time to lose, once his force was on the west bank of the Hudson. General Lincoln cut off his communications with Canada and was soon laying siege to Ticonderoga. The American army facing Burgoyne was now commanded by General Gates. This Englishman, the godson of Horace Walpole, had gained by successful intrigue powerful support in Congress. That body was always paying too much heed to local claims and jealousies and on the 2d of August it removed Schuyler of New York because he was disliked by the soldiers from New England and gave the command to Gates. Washington was far away maneuvering to meet Howe and he was never able to watch closely the campaign in the north. Gates, indeed, considered himself independent of Washington and reported not to the Commander-in-Chief but direct to Congress. On the 19th of September Burgoyne attacked Gates in a strong



entrenched position on Bemis Heights, at Stillwater. There was a long and bitter fight, but by evening Burgoyne had not carried the main position and had lost more than five hundred men whom he could ill spare from his scanty numbers.

Burgoyne's condition was now growing desperate. American forces barred retreat to Canada. He must go back and meet both frontal and flank attacks, or go forward, or surrender. To go forward now had most promise, for at last Howe had instructed Clinton, left in command at New York, to move, and Clinton was making rapid progress up the Hudson. On the 7th of October Burgoyne attacked again at Stillwater. This time he was decisively defeated, a result due to the amazing energy in attack of Benedict Arnold, who had been stripped of his command by an intrigue. Gates would not even speak to him and his lingering in the American camp was unwelcome. Yet as a volunteer Arnold charged the British line madly and broke it. Burgoyne's best general, Fraser, was killed in the fight. Burgoyne retired to Saratoga and there at last faced the prospects of getting back to Fort Edward and to Canada. It may be that he could have cut his way through, but this is doubtful. Without risk of destruction he could

not move in any direction. His enemies now outnumbered him nearly four to one. His camp was swept by the American guns and his men were under arms night and day. American sharpshooters stationed themselves at daybreak in trees about the British camp and any one who appeared in the open risked his life. If a cap was held up in view instantly two or three balls would pass through it. His horses were killed by rifle shots. Burgoyne had little food for his men and none for his horses. His Indians had long since gone off in dudgeon. Many of his Canadian French slipped off homeward and so did the Loyalists. The German troops were naturally dispirited. A British officer tells of the deadly homesickness of these poor men. They would gather in groups of two dozen or so and mourn that they would never again see their native land. They died, a score at a time, of no other disease than sickness for their homes. They could have no pride in trying to save a lost cause. Burgoyne was surrounded and, on the 17th of October, he was obliged to surrender.

Gates proposed to Burgoyne hard terms — surrender with no honors of war. The British were to lay down their arms in their encampments and to march out without weapons of any kind. Burgoyne

declared that, rather than accept such terms, he would fight still and take no quarter. A shadow was falling on the path of Gates. The term of service of some of his men had expired. The New Englanders were determined to stay and see the end of Burgoyne but a good many of the New York troops went off. Sickness, too, was increasing. Above all General Clinton was advancing up the Hudson. British ships could come up freely as far as Albany and in a few days Clinton might make a formidable advance. Gates, a timid man, was in a hurry. He therefore agreed that the British should march from their camp with the honors of war, that the troops should be taken to New England, and from there to England. They must not serve again in North America during the war but there was nothing in the terms to prevent their serving in Europe and relieving British regiments for service in America. Gates had the courtesy to keep his army where it could not see the laying down of arms by Burgoyne's force. About five thousand men, of whom sixteen hundred were Germans and only three thousand five hundred fit for duty, surrendered to sixteen thousand Americans. Burgoyne gave offense to German officers by saying in his report that he might have held out longer

had all his troops been British. This is probably true but the British met with only a just Nemesis for using soldiers who had no call of duty to serve.

The army set out on its long march of two hundred miles to Boston. The late autumn weather was cold, the army was badly clothed and fed, and the discomfort of the weary route was increased by the bitter antagonism of the inhabitants. They respected the regular British soldier but at the Germans they shouted insults and the Loyalists they despised as traitors. The camp at the journey's end was on the ground at Cambridge where two years earlier Washington had trained his first army. Every day Burgoyne expected to embark. There was delay and, at last, he knew the reason. Congress repudiated the terms granted by Gates. A tangled dispute followed. Washington probably had no sympathy with the quibbling of Congress. But he had no desire to see this army return to Europe and release there an army to serve in America. Burgoyne's force was never sent to England. For nearly a year it lay at Boston. Then it was marched to Virginia. The men suffered great hardships and the numbers fell by desertion and escape. When peace came in 1783 there was no army to take back to England; Burgoyne's soldiers

had been merged into the American people. It may well be, indeed, that descendants of his beaten men have played an important part in building up the United States. The irony of history is unconquerable.

## CHAPTER VII

### WASHINGTON AND HIS COMRADES AT VALLEY FORGE

WASHINGTON had met defeat in every considerable battle at which he was personally present. His first appearance in military history, in the Ohio campaign against the French, twenty-two years before the Revolution, was marked by a defeat, the surrender of Fort Necessity. Again in the next year, when he fought to relieve the disaster to Braddock's army, defeat was his portion. Defeat had pursued him in the battles of the Revolution — before New York, at the Brandywine, at Germantown. The campaign against Canada, which he himself planned, had failed. He had lost New York and Philadelphia. But, like William III of England, who in his long struggle with France hardly won a battle and yet forced Louis XIV to accept his terms of peace, Washington, by suddenness in reprisal, by skill in resource when his plans

seemed to have been shattered, grew on the hard rock of defeat the flower of victory.

There was never a time when Washington was not trusted by men of real military insight or by the masses of the people. But a general who does not win victories in the field is open to attack. By the winter of 1777 when Washington, with his army reduced and needy, was at Valley Forge keeping watch on Howe in Philadelphia, John Adams and others were talking of the sin of idolatry in the worship of Washington, of its flavor of the accursed spirit of monarchy, and of the punishment which "the God of Heaven and Earth" must inflict for such perversity. Adams was all against a Fabian policy and wanted to settle issues forever by a short and strenuous war. The idol, it was being whispered, proved after all to have feet of clay. One general, and only one, had to his credit a really great victory — Gates, to whom Burgoyne had surrendered at Saratoga, and there was a movement to replace Washington by this laureled victor.

General Conway, an Irish soldier of fortune, was one of the most troublesome in this plot. He had served in the campaign about Philadelphia but had been blocked in his extravagant demands for promotion; so he turned for redress to Gates, the



star in the north. A malignant campaign followed in detraction of Washington. He had, it was said, worn out his men by useless marches; with an army three times as numerous as that of Howe, he had gained no victory; there was high fighting quality in the American army if properly led, but Washington despised the militia; a Gates or a Lee or a Conway would save the cause as Washington could not; and so on. "Heaven has determined to save your country or a weak general and bad counsellors would have ruined it"; so wrote Conway to Gates and Gates allowed the letter to be seen. The words were reported to Washington, who at once, in high dudgeon, called Conway to account. An explosion followed. Gates both denied that he had received a letter with the passage in question, and, at the same time, charged that there had been tampering with his private correspondence. He could not have it both ways. Conway was merely impudent in reply to Washington, but Gates laid the whole matter before Congress. Washington wrote to Gates, in reply to his denials, ironical references to "rich treasures of knowledge and experience" "guarded with penurious reserve" by Conway from his leaders but revealed to Gates. There was no irony in Washington's reference to malignant

detraction and mean intrigue. At the same time he said to Gates: "My temper leads me to peace and harmony with all men," and he deplored the internal strife which injured the great cause. Conway soon left America. Gates lived to command another American army and to end his career by a crowning disaster.

Washington had now been for more than two years in the chief command and knew his problems. It was a British tradition that standing armies were a menace to liberty, and the tradition had gained strength in crossing the sea. Washington would have wished a national army recruited by Congress alone and bound to serve for the duration of the war. There was much talk at the time of a "new model army" similar in type to the wonderful creation of Oliver Cromwell. The Thirteen Colonies became, however, thirteen nations. Each reserved the right to raise its own levies in its own way. To induce men to enlist Congress was twice handicapped. First, it had no power of taxation and could only ask the States to provide what it needed. The second handicap was even greater. When Congress offered bounties to those who enlisted in the Continental army, some of the States offered higher bounties for their own levies

of militia, and one authority was bidding against the other. This encouraged short-term enlistments. If a man could re-enlist and again secure a bounty, he would gain more than if he enlisted at once for the duration of the war.

An army is an intricate mechanism needing the same variety of agencies that is required for the well-being of a community. The chief aim is, of course, to defeat the enemy, and to do this an army must be prepared to move rapidly. Means of transport, so necessary in peace, are even more urgently needed in war. Thus Washington always needed military engineers to construct roads and bridges. Before the Revolution the greater part of such services had been provided in America by the regular British army, now the enemy. British officers declared that the American army was without engineers who knew the science of war, and certainly the forts on which they spent their skill in the North, those on the lower Hudson, and at Ticonderoga, at the head of Lake George, fell easily before the assailant. Good maps were needed, and in this Washington was badly served, though the defect was often corrected by his intimate knowledge of the country. Another service ill-equipped was what we should now call the Red Cross

Epidemics, and especially smallpox, wrought havoc in the army. Then, as now, shattered nerves were sometimes the result of the strain of military life. "The wind of a ball," what we should now call shell-shock, sometimes killed men whose bodies appeared to be uninjured. To our more advanced knowledge the medical science of the time seems crude. The physicians of New England, today perhaps the most expert body of medical men in the world, were even then highly skillful. But the surgeons and nurses were too few. This was true of both sides in the conflict. Prisoners in hospitals often suffered terribly and each side brought charges of ill-treatment against the other. The prison-ships in the harbor of New York, where American prisoners were confined, became a scandal, and much bitter invective against British brutality is found in the literature of the period. The British leaders, no less than Washington himself, were humane men, and ignorance and inadequate equipment will explain most of the hardships, though an occasional officer on either side was undoubtedly callous in respect to the sufferings of the enemy.

Food and clothing, the first vital necessities of an army, were often deplorably scarce. In a land

of farmers there was food enough. Its lack in the army was chiefly due to bad transport. Clothing was another matter. One of the things insisted upon in a well-trained army is a decent regard for appearance, and in the eyes of the French and the British officers the American army usually seemed rather unkempt. The formalities of dress, the uniformity of pipe-clay and powdered hair, of polished steel and brass, can of course be overdone. The British army had too much of it, but to Washington's force the danger was of having too little. It was not easy to induce farmers and frontiersmen who at home began the day without the use of water, razor, or brush, to appear on parade clean, with hair powdered, faces shaved, and clothes neat. In the long summer days the men were told to shave before going to bed that they might prepare the more quickly for parade in the morning, and to fill their canteens over night if an early march was imminent. Some of the regiments had uniforms which gave them a sufficiently smart appearance. The cocked hat, the loose hunting shirt with its fringed border, the breeches of brown leather or duck, the brown gaiters or leggings, the powdered hair, were familiar marks of the soldier of the Revolution.

During a great part of the war, however, in spite of supplies brought from both France and the West Indies, Washington found it difficult to secure for his men even decent clothing of any kind, whether of military cut or not. More than a year after he took command, in the fighting about New York, a great part of his army had no more semblance of uniform than hunting shirts on a common pattern. In the following December, he wrote of many men as either shivering in garments fit only for summer wear or as entirely naked. There was a time in the later campaign in the South when hundreds of American soldiers marched stark naked, except for breech cloths. One of the most pathetic hardships of the soldier's life was due to the lack of boots. More than one of Washington's armies could be tracked by the bloody footprints of his barefooted men. Near the end of the war Benedict Arnold, who knew whereof he spoke, described the American army as "illy clad, badly fed, and worse paid," pay being then two or three years overdue. On the other hand, there is evidence that life in the army was not without its compensations. Enforced dwelling in the open air saved men from diseases such as consumption and the movement from camp to camp gave a broader outlook to the farmer's

sons. The army could usually make a brave parade. On ceremonial occasions the long hair of the men would be tied back and made white with powder, even though their uniforms were little more than rags.

The men carried weapons some of which, in, at any rate, the early days of the war, were made by hand at the village smithy. A man might take to the war a weapon forged by himself. The American soldier had this advantage over the British soldier, that he used, if not generally, at least in some cases, not the smooth-bore musket but the grooved-rifle by which the ball was made to rotate in its flight. The fire from this rifle was extremely accurate. At first weapons were few and ammunition was scanty, but in time there were importations from France and also supplies from American gun factories. The standard length of the barrel was three and a half feet, a portentous size compared with that of the modern weapon. The loading was from the muzzle, a process so slow that one of the favorite tactics of the time was to await the fire of the enemy and then charge quickly and bayonet him before he could reload. The old method of firing off the musket by means of slow matches kept alight during action was now obsolete;



the latest device was the flintlock. But there was always a measure of doubt whether the weapon would go off. Partly on this account Benjamin Franklin, the wisest man of his time, declared for the use of the pike of an earlier age rather than the bayonet and for bows and arrows instead of firearms. A soldier, he said, could shoot four arrows to one bullet. An arrow wound was more disabling than a bullet wound; and arrows did not becloud the vision with smoke. The bullet remained, however, the chief means of destruction, and the fire of Washington's soldiers usually excelled that of the British. These, in their turn, were superior in the use of the bayonet.

Powder and lead were hard to get. The inventive spirit of America was busy with plans to procure saltpeter and other ingredients for making powder, but it remained scarce. Since there was no standard firearm, each soldier required bullets specially suited to his weapon. The men melted lead and cast it in their own bullet-molds. It is an instance of the minor ironies of war that the great equestrian statue of George III, which had been erected in New York in days more peaceful, was melted into bullets for killing that monarch's soldiers. Another necessity was paper for cartridges

and wads. The cartridge of that day was a paper envelope containing the charge of ball and powder. This served also as a wad, after being emptied of its contents, and was pushed home with a ramrod. A store of German Bibles in Pennsylvania fell into the hands of the soldiers at a moment when paper was a crying need, and the pages of these Bibles were used for wads.

The artillery of the time seems feeble compared with the monster weapons of death which we know in our own age. Yet it was an important factor in the war. It is probable that before the war not a single cannon had been made in the colonies. From the outset Washington was hampered for lack of artillery. Neutrals, especially the Dutch in the West Indies, sold guns to the Americans, and France was a chief source of supply during long periods when the British lost the command of the sea. There was always difficulty about equipping cavalry, especially in the North. The Virginian was at home on horseback, and in the farther South bands of cavalry did service during the later years of the war, but many of the fighting riders of today might tomorrow be guiding their horses peacefully behind the plough.

The pay of the soldiers remained to Washington

a baffling problem. When the war ended their pay was still heavily in arrears. The States were timid about imposing taxation and few if any paid promptly the levies made upon them. Congress bridged the chasm in finance by issuing paper money which so declined in value that, as Washington said grimly, it required a wagon-load of money to pay for a wagon-load of supplies. The soldier received his pay in this money at its face value, and there is little wonder that the "continental dollar" is still in the United States a symbol of worthlessness. At times the lack of pay caused mutiny which would have been dangerous but for Washington's firm and tactful management in the time of crisis. There was in him both the kindly feeling of the humane man and the rigor of the army leader. He sent men to death without flinching, but he was at one with his men in their sufferings, and no problem gave him greater anxiety than that of pay, affecting, as it did, the health and spirits of men who, while unpaid, had no means of softening the daily tale of hardship.

Desertion was always hard to combat. With the homesickness which led sometimes to desertion Washington must have had a secret sympathy, for his letters show that he always longed for that

pleasant home in Virginia which he did not allow himself to revisit until nearly the end of the war. The land of a farmer on service often remained untilled, and there are pathetic cases of families in bitter need because the breadwinner was in the army. In frontier settlements his absence sometimes meant the massacre of his family by the savages. There is little wonder that desertion was common, so common that after a reverse the men went away by hundreds. As they usually carried with them their rifles and other equipment, desertion involved a double loss. On one occasion some soldiers undertook for themselves the punishment of deserters. Men of the First Pennsylvania Regiment who had recaptured three deserters, beheaded one of them and returned to their camp with the head carried on a pole. More than once it happened that condemned men were paraded before the troops for execution with the graves dug and the coffins lying ready. The death sentence would be read, and then, as the firing party took aim, a reprieve would be announced. The reprieve in such circumstances was omitted often enough to make the condemned endure the real agony of death.

Religion offered its consolations in the army and

Washington gave much thought to the service of the chaplains. He told his army that fine as it was to be a patriot it was finer still to be a Christian. It is an odd fact that, though he attended the Anglican Communion service before and after the war, he did not partake of the Communion during the war. What was in his mind we do not know. He was disposed, as he said himself, to let men find "that road to Heaven which to them shall seem the most direct," and he was without Puritan fervor, but he had deep religious feeling. During the troubled days at Valley Forge a neighbor came upon him alone in the bush on his knees praying aloud, and stole away unobserved. He would not allow in the army a favorite Puritan custom of burning the Pope in effigy, and the prohibition was not easily enforced among men, thousands of whom bore scriptural names from ancestors who thought the Pope anti-Christ.

Washington's winter quarters at Valley Forge were only twenty miles from Philadelphia, among hills easily defended. It is matter for wonder that Howe, with an army well equipped, did not make some attempt to destroy the army of Washington which passed the winter so near and in acute

distress. The Pennsylvania Loyalists, with dark days soon to come, were bitter at Howe's inactivity, full of tragic meaning for themselves. He said that he could achieve nothing permanent by attack. It may be so; but it is a sound principle in warfare to destroy the enemy when this is possible. There was a time when in Washington's whole force not more than two thousand men were in a condition to fight. Congress was responsible for the needs of the army but was now, in sordid inefficiency, cooped up in the little town of York, eighty miles west of Valley Forge, to which it had fled. There was as yet no real federal union. The seat of authority was in the State Governments, and we need not wonder that, with the passing of the first burst of devotion which united the colonies in a common cause, Congress declined rapidly in public esteem. "What a lot of damned scoundrels we had in that second Congress" said, at a later date, Gouverneur Morris of Philadelphia to John Jay of New York, and Jay answered gravely, "Yes, we had." The body, so despised in the retrospect, had no real executive government, no organized departments. Already before Independence was proclaimed there had been talk of a permanent union, but the members of Congress had shown no

sense of urgency, and it was not until November 15, 1777, when the British were in Philadelphia and Congress was in exile at York, that Articles of Confederation were adopted. By the following midsummer many of the States had ratified these articles, but Maryland, the last to assent, did not accept the new union until 1781, so that Congress continued to act for the States without constitutional sanction during the greater part of the war.

The ineptitude of Congress is explained when we recall that it was a revolutionary body which indeed controlled foreign affairs and the issues of war and peace, coined money, and put forth paper money but had no general powers. Each State had but one vote, and thus a small and sparsely settled State counted for as much as populous Massachusetts or Virginia. The Congress must deal with each State only as a unit; it could not coerce a State; and it had no authority to tax or to coerce individuals. The utmost it could do was to appeal to good feeling, and when a State felt that it had a grievance such an appeal was likely to meet with a flaming retort.

Washington maintained towards Congress an attitude of deference and courtesy which it did not always deserve. The ablest men in the individual



States held aloof from Congress. They felt that they had more dignity and power if they sat in their own legislatures. The assembly which in the first days had as members men of the type of Washington and Franklin sank into a gathering of second-rate men who were divided into fierce factions. They debated interminably and did little. Each member usually felt that he must champion the interests of his own State against the hostility of others. It was not easy to create a sense of national life. The union was only a league of friendship. States which for a century or more had barely acknowledged their dependence upon Great Britain, were chary about coming under the control of a new centralizing authority at Philadelphia. The new States were sovereign and some of them went so far as to send envoys of their own to negotiate with foreign powers in Europe. When it was urged that Congress should have the power to raise taxes in the States, there were patriots who asked sternly what the war was about if it was not to vindicate the principle that the people of a State alone should have power of taxation over themselves. Of New England all the other States were jealous and they particularly disliked that proud and censorious city which already was accused of

believing that God had made Boston for Himself and all the rest of the world for Boston. The religion of New England did not suit the Anglicans of Virginia or the Roman Catholics of Maryland, and there was resentful suspicion of Puritan intolerance. John Adams said quite openly that there were no religious teachers in Philadelphia to compare with those of Boston and naturally other colonies drew away from the severe and rather acrid righteousness of which he was a type.

~~Inefficiency meanwhile~~ brought terrible suffering at Valley Forge, and the horrors of that winter remain still vivid in the memory of the American people. The army marched to Valley Forge on December 17, 1777, and in midwinter everything from houses to entrenchments had still to be created. At once there was busy activity in cutting down trees for the log huts. They were built nearly square, sixteen feet by fourteen, in rows, with the door opening on improvised streets. Since boards were scarce, and it was difficult to make roofs rainproof, Washington tried to stimulate ingenuity by offering a reward of one hundred dollars for an improved method of roofing. The fireplaces of wood were protected with thick clay.

Firewood was abundant, but, with little food for oxen and horses, men had to turn themselves into draught animals to bring in supplies.

Sometimes the army was for a week without meat. *out* [Many horses died for lack of forage or of proper care, a waste which especially disturbed Washington, a lover of horses.] When quantities of clothing were ready for use, they were not delivered at Valley Forge owing to lack of transport. Washington expressed his contempt for officers who resigned their commissions in face of these distresses. ] No one, he said, ever heard him say a word about resignation. There were many desertions but, on the whole, he marveled at the patience of his men and that they did not mutiny. With a certain grim humor they chanted phrases about "no pay, no clothes, no provisions, no rum," and sang an ode glorifying war and Washington. Hundreds of them marched barefoot, their blood staining the snow or the frozen ground while, at the same time, stores of shoes and clothing were lying unused somewhere on the roads to the camp.

Sickness raged in the army. Few men at Valley Forge, wrote Washington, had more than a sheet, many only part of a sheet, and some nothing at all. Hospital stores were lacking. For want of straw

and blankets the sick lay perishing on the frozen ground. When Washington had been at Valley Forge for less than a week, he had to report nearly three thousand men unfit for duty because of their nakedness in the bitter winter. Then, as always, what we now call the "profiteer" was holding up supplies for higher prices. To the British at Philadelphia, because they paid in gold, things were furnished which were denied to Washington at Valley Forge, and he announced that he would hang any one who took provisions to Philadelphia. To keep his men alive Washington had sometimes to take food by force from the inhabitants and then there was an outcry that this was robbery. With many sick, his horses so disabled that he could not move his artillery, and his defenses very slight, he could have made only a weak fight had Howe attacked him. Yet the legislature of Pennsylvania told him that, instead of lying quiet in winter quarters, he ought to be carrying on an active campaign. In most wars irresponsible men sitting by comfortable firesides are sure they knew best how the thing should be done.

The bleak hillside at Valley Forge was something more than a prison. Washington's staff was known as his family and his relations with them were cordial

and even affectionate. The young officers faced their hardships cheerily and gave meager dinners to which no one might go if he was so well off as to have trousers without holes. They talked and sang and jested about their privations. By this time many of the bad officers, of whom Washington complained earlier, had been weeded out and he was served by a body of devoted men. There was much good comradeship. Partnership in suffering tends to draw men together. In the company which gathered about Washington, two men, mere youths at the time, have a world-wide fame. The young Alexander Hamilton, barely twenty-one years of age, and widely known already for his political writings, had the rank of lieutenant colonel gained for his services in the fighting about New York. He was now Washington's confidential secretary, a position in which he soon grew restless. His ambition was to be one of the great military leaders of the Revolution. Before the end of the war he had gone back to fighting and he distinguished himself in the last battle of the war at Yorktown. The other youthful figure was the Marquis de La Fayette. It is not without significance that a noble square bears his name in the capital named after Washington. The two men loved each other.

The young French aristocrat, with both a great name and great possessions, was fired in 1776, when only nineteen, with zeal for the American cause. "With the welfare of America," he wrote to his wife, "is closely linked the welfare of mankind." Idealists in France believed that America was leading in the remaking of the world. When it was known that La Fayette intended to go to fight in America, the King of France forbade it, since France had as yet no quarrel with England. The youth, however, chartered a ship, landed in South Carolina, hurried to Philadelphia, and was a major general in the American army when he was twenty years of age.

La Fayette rendered no serious military service to the American cause. He arrived in time to fight in the battle of the Brandywine. Washington praised him for his bravery and military ardor and wrote to Congress that he was sensible, discreet, and able to speak English freely. It was with an eye to the influence in France of the name of the young noble that Congress advanced him so rapidly. La Fayette was sincere and generous in spirit. He had, however, little military capacity. Later when he might have directed the course of the French Revolution he was found wanting in

force of character. The great Mirabeau tried to work with him for the good of France, but was repelled by La Fayette's jealous vanity, a vanity so greedy of praise that Jefferson called it a "canine appetite for popularity and fame." La Fayette once said that he had never had a thought with which he could reproach himself, and he boasted that he has mastered three kings — the King of England in the American Revolution, the King of France, and King Mob of Paris during the upheaval in France. He was useful as a diplomatist rather than as a soldier. Later, in an hour of deep need, Washington sent La Fayette to France to ask for aid. He was influential at the French court and came back with abundant promises, which were in part fulfilled.

Washington himself and Oliver Cromwell are perhaps the only two civilian generals in history who stand in the first rank as military leaders. It is doubtful indeed whether it is not rather character than military skill which gives Washington his place. Only one other general of the Revolution attained to first rank even in secondary fame. Nathanael Greene was of Quaker stock from Rhode Island. He was a natural student and when trouble with the mother country was impending



in 1774 he spent the leisure which he could spare from his forges in the study of military history and in organizing the local militia. Because of his zeal for military service he was expelled from the Society of Friends. In 1775 when war broke out he was promptly on hand with a contingent from Rhode Island. In little more than a year and after a very slender military experience he was in command of the army on Long Island. On the Hudson defeat not victory was his lot. He had, however, as much stern resolve as Washington. He shared Washington's success in the attack on Trenton, and his defeats at the Brandywine and at Germantown. Now he was at Valley Forge, and when, on March 2, 1778, he became quartermaster general, the outlook for food and supplies steadily improved. Later, in the South, he rendered brilliant service which made possible the final American victory at Yorktown.

Henry Knox, a Boston bookseller, had, like Greene, only slight training for military command. It shows the dearth of officers to fight the highly disciplined British army that Knox, at the age of twenty-five, and fresh from commercial life, was placed in charge of the meager artillery which Washington had before Boston. It was Knox, who,

with heart-breaking labor, took to the American front the guns captured at Ticonderoga. Throughout the war he did excellent service with the artillery, and Washington placed a high value upon his services. He valued too those of Daniel Morgan, an old fighter in the Indian wars, who left his farm in Virginia when war broke out, and marched his company of riflemen to join the army before Boston. He served with Arnold at the siege of Quebec, and was there taken prisoner. He was exchanged and had his due revenge when he took part in the capture of Burgoyne's army. He was now at Valley Forge. Later he had a command under Greene in the South and there, as we shall see, he won the great success of the Battle of Cowpens in January, 1781.

It was the peculiar misfortune of Washington that the three men, Arnold, Lee, and Gates, who ought to have rendered him the greatest service, proved unfaithful. Benedict Arnold, next to Washington himself, was probably the most brilliant and resourceful soldier of the Revolution. Washington so trusted him that, when the dark days at Valley Forge were over, he placed him in command of the recaptured federal capital. To-day the name of Arnold would rank high in the

memory of a grateful country had he not fallen into the bottomless pit of treason. The same is in some measure true of Charles Lee, who was freed by the British in an exchange of prisoners and joined Washington at Valley Forge late in the spring of 1778. Lee was so clever with his pen as to be one of the reputed authors of the Letters of Junius. He had served as a British officer in the conquest of Canada, and later as major general in the army of Poland. He had a jealous and venomous temper and could never conceal the contempt of the professional soldier for civilian generals. He, too, fell into the abyss of treason. Horatio Gates, also a regular soldier, had served under Braddock and was thus at that early period a comrade of Washington. Intriguer he was, but not a traitor. It was incompetence and perhaps cowardice which brought his final ruin.

Europe had thousands of unemployed officers some of whom had had experience in the Seven Years' War and many turned eagerly to America for employment. There were some good soldiers among these fighting adventurers. Kosciuszko, later famous as a Polish patriot, rose by his merits to the rank of brigadier general in the American army; De Kalb, son of a German peasant, though

not a baron, as he called himself, proved worthy of the rank of a major general. There was, however, a flood of volunteers of another type. French officers fleeing from their creditors and sometimes under false names and titles, made their way to America as best they could and came to Washington with pretentious claims. Germans and Poles there were, too, and also exiles from that unhappy island which remains still the most vexing problem of British politics. Some of them wrote their own testimonials; some, too, were spies. On the first day, Washington wrote, they talked only of serving freely a noble cause, but within a week were demanding promotion and advance of money. Sometimes they took a high tone with members of Congress who had not courage to snub what Washington called impudence and vain boasting. "I am haunted and teased to death by the impertinence of some and dissatisfaction of others" wrote Washington of these people.

One foreign officer rendered incalculable service to the American cause. It was not only on the British side that Germans served in the American Revolution. The Baron von Steuben was, like La Fayette, a man of rank in his own country, and his personal service to the Revolution was much

greater than that of La Fayette. Steuben had served on the staff of Frederick the Great and was distinguished for his wit and his polished manners. There was in him nothing of the needy adventurer. The sale of Hessian and other troops to the British by greedy German princes was met in some circles in Germany by a keen desire to aid the cause of the young republic. Steuben, who held a lucrative post, became convinced, while on a visit to Paris, that he could render service in training the Americans. With quick sympathy and showing no reserve in his generous spirit he abandoned his country, as it proved forever, took ship for the United States, and arrived in November, 1777. Washington welcomed him at Valley Forge in the following March. He was made Inspector General and at once took in hand the organization of the army. He prepared "Regulations for the Order and Discipline of the Troops of the United States" later, in 1779, issued as a book. Under this German influence British methods were discarded. The word of command became short and sharp. The British practice of leaving recruits to be trained by sergeants, often ignorant, coarse, and brutal, was discarded, and officers themselves did this work. The last letter which Washington wrote before he

resigned his command at the end of the war was to thank Steuben for his invaluable aid. Charles Lee did not believe that American recruits could be quickly trained so as to be able to face the disciplined British battalions. Steuben was to prove that Lee was wrong to Lee's own entire undoing at Monmouth when fighting began in 1778.

The British army in America furnished sharp contrasts to that of Washington. If the British jeered at the fighting quality of citizens, these retorted that the British soldier was a mere slave. There were two great stains upon the British system, the press-gang and flogging. Press-gangs might seize men abroad in the streets of a town and, unless they could prove that they were gentlemen in rank, they could be sent in the fleet to serve in the remotest corners of the earth. In both navy and army flogging outraged the dignity of manhood. The liability to this brutal and degrading punishment kept all but the dregs of the populace from enlisting in the British army. It helped to fix the deep gulf between officers and men. Forty years later Napoleon Bonaparte, despot though he might be, was struck by this separation. He himself went freely among his men, warmed himself at

their fire, and talked to them familiarly about their work, and he thought that the British officer was too aloof in his demeanor. In the British army serving in America there were many officers of aristocratic birth and long training in military science. When they found that American officers were frequently drawn from a class of society which in England would never aspire to a commission, and were largely self-taught, not unnaturally they jeered at an army so constituted. Another fact excited British disdain. The Americans were technically rebels against their lawful ruler, and rebels in arms have no rights as belligerents. When the war ended more than a thousand American prisoners were still held in England on the capital charge of treason. Nothing stirred Washington's anger more deeply than the remark sometimes made by British officers that the prisoners they took were receiving undeserved mercy when they were not hanged.

There was much debate at Valley Forge as to the prospect for the future. When we look at available numbers during the war we appreciate the view of a British officer that in spite of Washington's failures and of British victories the war was serious, "an ugly job, a damned affair indeed." The



population of the colonies — some 2,500,000 — was about one-third that of the United Kingdom; and for the British the war was remote from the base of supply. In those days, considering the means of transport, America was as far from England as at the present day is Australia. Sometimes the voyage across the sea occupied two and even three months, and, with the relatively small ships of the time, it required a vast array of transports to carry an army of twenty or thirty thousand men. In the spring of 1776 Great Britain had found it impossible to raise at home an army of even twenty thousand men for service in America, and she was forced to rely in large part upon mercenary soldiers. This was nothing new. Her island people did not like service abroad and this unwillingness was intensified in regard to war in remote America. Moreover Whig leaders in England discouraged enlistment. They were bitterly hostile to the war which they regarded as an attack not less on their own liberties than on those of America. It would be too much to ascribe to the ignorant British common soldier of the time any deep conviction as to the merits or demerits of the cause for which he fought. There is no evidence that, once in the army, he was less

ready to attack the Americans than any other foe. Certainly the Americans did not think he was half-hearted.

The British soldier fought indeed with more resolute determination than did the hired auxiliary at his side. These German troops played a notable part in the war. The despotic princes of the lesser German states were accustomed to sell the services of their troops. Despotic Russia, too, was a likely field for such enterprise. When, however, it was proposed to the Empress Catherine II that she should furnish twenty thousand men for service in America she retorted with the sage advice that it was England's true interest to settle the quarrel in America without war. Germany was left as the recruiting field. British efforts to enlist Germans as volunteers in her own army were promptly checked by the German rulers and it was necessary literally to buy the troops from their princes. One-fourth of the able-bodied men of Hesse-Cassel were shipped to America. They received four times the rate of pay at home and their ruler received in addition some half million dollars a year. The men suffered terribly and some died of sickness for the homes to which thousands of them never returned. German generals, such as Knyphausen and Riedesel,

gave the British sincere and effective service. The Hessians were, however, of doubtful benefit to the British. It angered the Americans that hired troops should be used against them, an anger not lessened by the contempt which the Hessians showed for the colonial officers as plebeians.

The two sides were much alike in their qualities and were skillful in propaganda. In Britain lurid tales were told of the colonists scalping the wounded at Lexington and using poisoned bullets at Bunker Hill. In America every prisoner in British hands was said to be treated brutally and every man slain in the fighting to have been murdered. The use of foreign troops was a fruitful theme. The report ran through the colonies that the Hessians were huge ogre-like monsters, with double rows of teeth round each jaw, who had come at the call of the British tyrant to slay women and children. In truth many of the Hessians became good Americans. In spite of the loyalty of their officers they were readily induced to desert. The wit of Benjamin Franklin was enlisted to compose telling appeals, translated into simple German, which promised grants of land to those who should abandon an unrighteous cause. The Hessian trooper who opened a packet of tobacco might find in

the wrapper appeals both to his virtue and to his cupidity. It was easy for him to resist them when the British were winning victories and he was dreaming of a return to the Fatherland with a comfortable accumulation of pay, but it was different when reverses overtook British arms. Then many hundreds slipped away; and today their blood flows in the veins of thousands of prosperous American farmers.

## CHAPTER VIII

### THE ALLIANCE WITH FRANCE AND ITS RESULTS

WASHINGTON badly needed aid from Europe, but there every important government was monarchical and it was not easy for a young republic, the child of revolution, to secure an ally. France tingled with joy at American victories and sorrowed at American reverses, but motives were mingled and perhaps hatred of England was stronger than love for liberty in America. The young La Fayette had a pure zeal, but he would not have fought for the liberty of colonists in Mexico as he did for those in Virginia; and the difference was that service in Mexico would not hurt the enemy of France so recently triumphant. He hated England and said so quite openly. The thought of humiliating and destroying that "insolent nation" was always to him an inspiration. Vergennes, the French Foreign Minister, though he lacked genius, was a man of boundless zeal and

energy. He was at work at four o'clock in the morning and he spent his long days in toil for his country. He believed that England was the tyrant of the seas, "the monster against whom we should be always prepared," a greedy, perfidious neighbor, the natural enemy of France.

From the first days of the trouble in regard to the Stamp Act Vergennes had rejoiced that England's own children were turning against her. He had French military officers in England spying on her defenses. When war broke out he showed no nice regard for the rules of neutrality and helped the colonies in every way possible. It was a French writer who led in these activities. Beaumarchais is known to the world chiefly as the creator of the character of Figaro, which has become the type of the bold, clever, witty, and intriguing rascal, but he played a real part in the American Revolution. We need not inquire too closely into his motives. There was hatred of the English, that "audacious, unbridled, shameless people," and there was, too, the zeal for liberal ideas which made Queen Marie Antoinette herself take a pretty interest in the "dear republicans" overseas who were at the same time fighting the national enemy. Beaumarchais secured from the government money

with which he purchased supplies to be sent to America. He had a great warehouse in Paris, and, under the rather fantastic Spanish name of *Rodrigue Hortalez & Co.*, he sent vast quantities of munitions and clothing to America. Cannon, not from private firms but from the government arsenals, were sent across the sea. When Vergennes showed scruples about this violation of neutrality, the answer of Beaumarchais was that governments were not bound by rules of morality applicable to private persons. Vergennes learned well the lesson and, while protesting to the British ambassador in Paris that France was blameless, he permitted outrageous breaches of the laws of neutrality.

Secret help was one thing, open alliance another. Early in 1776 Silas Deane, a member from Connecticut of the Continental Congress, was named as envoy to France to secure French aid. The day was to come when Deane should believe the struggle against Britain hopeless and counsel submission, but now he showed a furious zeal. He knew hardly a word of French, but this did not keep him from making his elaborate programme well understood. Himself a trader, he promised France vast profits from the monopoly of the trade of America when independence should be secure.



He gave other promises not more easy of fulfillment. To Frenchmen zealous for the ideals of liberty and seeking military careers in America he promised freely commissions as colonels and even generals and was the chief cause of that deluge of European officers which proved to Washington so annoying. It was through Deane's activities that La Fayette became a volunteer. Through him came too the proposal to send to America the Comte de Broglie who should be greater than colonel or general — a generalissimo, a dictator. He was to brush aside Washington, to take command of the American armies, and by his prestige and skill to secure France as an ally and win victory in the field. For such services Broglie asked only despotic power while he served and for life a great pension which would, he declared, not be one-hundredth part of his real value. That Deane should have considered a scheme so fantastic reveals the measure of his capacity, and by the end of 1776 Benjamin Franklin was sent to Paris to bring his tried skill to bear upon the problem of the alliance. With Deane and Franklin as a third member of the commission was associated Arthur Lee who had vainly sought aid at the courts of Spain and Prussia.

France was, however, coy. The end of 1776 saw the colonial cause at a very low ebb, with Washington driven from New York and about to be driven from Philadelphia. Defeat is not a good argument for an alliance. France was willing to send arms to America and willing to let American privateers use freely her ports. The ship which carried Franklin to France soon busied herself as a privateer and reaped for her crew a great harvest of prize money. In a single week of June, 1777, this ship captured a score of British merchantmen, of which more than two thousand were taken by Americans during the war. France allowed the American privateers to come and go as they liked, and gave England smooth words, but no redress. There is little wonder that England threatened to hang captured American sailors as pirates.

It was the capture of Burgoyne at Saratoga which brought decision to France. That was the victory which Vergennes had demanded before he would take open action. One British army had surrendered. Another was in an untenable position in Philadelphia. It was known that the British fleet had declined. With the best of it in America, France was the more likely to win successes in Europe. The Bourbon king of France

could, too, draw into the war the Bourbon king of Spain, and Spain had good ships. The defects of France and Spain on the sea were not in ships but in men. The invasion of England was not improbable and then less than a score of years might give France both avenging justice for her recent humiliation and safety for her future. Britain should lose America, she should lose India, she should pay in a hundred ways for her past triumphs, for the arrogance of Pitt, who had declared that he would so reduce France that she should never again rise. The future should belong not to Britain but to France. Thus it was that fervent patriotism argued after the defeat of Burgoyne. Frederick the Great told his ambassador at Paris to urge upon France that she had now a chance to strike England which might never again come. France need not, he said, fear his enmity, for he was as likely to help England as the devil to help a Christian. Whatever doubts Vergennes may have entertained about an open alliance with America were now swept away. The treaty of friendship with America was signed on February 6, 1778. On the 13th of March the French ambassador in London told the British Government, with studied insolence of tone, that the United

States were by their own declaration independent. Only a few weeks earlier the British ministry had said that there was no prospect of any foreign intervention to help the Americans and now in the most galling manner France told George III the one thing to which he would not listen, that a great part of his sovereignty was gone. Each country withdrew its ambassador and war quickly followed.

France had not tried to make a hard bargain with the Americans. She demanded nothing for herself and agreed not even to ask for the restoration of Canada. She required only that America should never restore the King's sovereignty in order to secure peace. Certain sections of opinion in America were suspicious of France. Was she not the old enemy who had so long harassed the frontiers of New England and New York? If George III was a despot what of Louis XVI, who had not even an elected Parliament to restrain him? Washington himself was distrustful of France and months after the alliance had been concluded he uttered the warning that hatred of England must not lead to over-confidence in France. "No nation," he said, "is to be trusted farther than it is bound by its interests." France, he thought, must desire to recover Canada, so recently lost. He did

not wish to see a great military power on the northern frontier of the United States. This would be to confirm the jeer of the Loyalists that the alliance was a case of the wooden horse in Troy; the old enemy would come back in the guise of a friend and would then prove to be master and bring the colonies under a servitude compared with which the British supremacy would seem indeed mild.

The intervention of France brought a cruel embarrassment to the Whig patriot in England. He could rejoice and mourn with American patriots because he believed that their cause was his own. It was as much the interest of Norfolk as of Massachusetts that the new despotism of a king, who ruled through a corrupt Parliament, should be destroyed. It was, however, another matter when France took a share in the fight. France fought less for freedom than for revenge, and the Englishman who, like Coke of Norfolk, could daily toast Washington as the greatest of men could not link that name with Louis XVI or with his minister Vergennes. The currents of the past are too swift and intricate to be measured exactly by the observer who stands on the shore of the present, but it is arguable that the Whigs might soon have brought about peace in England had it not been for

the intervention of France. No serious person any longer thought that taxation could be enforced upon America or that the colonies should be anything but free in regulating their own affairs. George III himself said that he who declared the taxing of America to be worth what it cost was "more fit for Bedlam than a seat in the Senate." The one concession Britain was not yet prepared to make was Independence. But Burke and many other Whigs were ready now for this, though Chatham still believed it would be the ruin of the British Empire.

Chatham, however, was all for conciliation, and it is not hard to imagine a group of wise men chosen from both sides, men British in blood and outlook, sitting round a table and reaching an agreement to result in a real independence for America and a real unity with Great Britain. A century and a quarter later a bitter war with an alien race in South Africa was followed by a result even more astounding. The surrender of Burgoyne had made the Prime Minister, Lord North, weary of his position. He had never been in sympathy with the King's policy and since the bad news had come in December he had pondered some radical step which should end the war. On February 17, 1778, before the treaty

of friendship between the United States and France had been made public, North startled the House of Commons by introducing a bill repealing the tax on tea, renouncing forever the right to tax America, and nullifying those changes in the constitution of Massachusetts which had so rankled in the minds of its people. A commission with full powers to negotiate peace would proceed at once to America and it might suspend at its discretion, and thus really repeal, any act touching America passed since 1763.

North had taken a sharp turn. The Whig clothes had been stolen by a Tory Prime Minister and if he wished to stay in office the Whigs had not the votes to turn him out. His supporters would accept almost anything in order to dish the Whigs. They swallowed now the bill, and it became law, but at the same time came, too, the war with France. It united the Tories; it divided the Whigs. All England was deeply stirred. Nearly every important town offered to raise volunteer forces at its own expense. The Government soon had fifteen thousand men recruited at private cost. Help was offered so freely that the Whig, John Wilkes, actually introduced into Parliament a bill to prohibit gifts of money to the Crown since this voluntary



taxation gave the Crown money without the consent of Parliament. The British patriot, gentle as he might be towards America, fumed against France. This was no longer only a domestic struggle between parties, but a war with an age-long foreign enemy. The populace resented what they called the insolence and the treachery of France and the French ambassador was pelted at Canterbury as he drove to the seacoast on his recall. In a large sense the French alliance was not an unmixed blessing for America, since it confused the counsels of her best friends in England.

In spite of this it is probably true that from this time the mass of the English people were against further attempts to coerce America. A change of ministry was urgently demanded. There was one leader to whom the nation looked in this grave crisis. The genius of William Pitt, Earl of Chatham, had won the last war against France and he had promoted the repeal of the Stamp Act. In America his name was held in reverence so high that New York and Charleston had erected statues in his honor. When the defeat of Burgoyne so shook the ministry that North was anxious to retire, Chatham, but for two obstacles, could probably have formed a ministry. One obstacle was

his age; as the event proved, he was near his end. It was, however, not this which kept him from office, but the resolve of George III. The King simply said that he would not have Chatham. In office Chatham would certainly rule and the King intended himself to rule. If Chatham would come in a subordinate position, well; but Chatham should not lead. The King declared that as long as even ten men stood by him he would hold out and he would lose his crown rather than call to office that clamorous Opposition which had attacked his American policy. "I will never consent," he said firmly, "to removing the members of the present Cabinet from my service." He asked North: "Are you resolved at the hour of danger to desert me?" North remained in office. Chatham soon died and, during four years still, George III was master of England. Throughout the long history of that nation there is no crisis in which one man took a heavier and more disastrous responsibility.

News came to Valley Forge of the alliance with France and there were great rejoicings. We are told that, to celebrate the occasion, Washington dined in public. We are not given the bill of fare

in that scene of famine; but by the springtime tension in regard to supplies had been relieved and we may hope that Valley Forge really feasted in honor of the great event. The same news brought gloom to the British in Philadelphia, for it had the stern meaning that the effort and loss involved in the capture of that city were in vain. Washington held most of the surrounding country so that supplies must come chiefly by sea. With a French fleet and a French army on the way to America, the British realized that they must concentrate their defenses. Thus the cheers at Valley Forge were really the sign that the British must go.

Sir William Howe, having taken Philadelphia, was determined not to be the one who should give it up. Feeling was bitter in England over the ghastly failure of Burgoyne, and he had gone home on parole to defend himself from his seat in the House of Commons. There Howe had a seat and he, too, had need to be on hand. Lord George Germain had censured him for his course and, to shield himself, was clearly resolved to make scapegoats of others. So, on May 18, 1778, at Philadelphia there was a farewell to Howe, which took the form of a *Mischianza*, something approaching the medieval tournament. Knights broke lances in

honor of fair ladies, there were arches and flowers and fancy costumes, and high-flown Latin and French, all in praise of the departing Howe. Obviously the garrison of Philadelphia had much time on its hands and could count upon, at least, some cheers from a friendly population. It is remembered still, with moralizings on the turns in human fortune, that Major André and Miss Margaret Shippen were the leaders in that gay scene, the one, in the days to come, to be hanged by Washington as a spy, because entrapped in the treason of Benedict Arnold, who became the husband of the other.

On May 24, 1778, Sir Henry Clinton took over from Howe the command of the British army in America and confronted a difficult problem. If d'Estaing, the French admiral, should sail straight for the Delaware he might destroy the fleet of little more than half his strength which lay there, and might quickly starve Philadelphia into surrender. The British must unite their forces to meet the peril from France, and New York, as an island, was the best point for a defense, chiefly naval. A move to New York was therefore urgent. It was by sea that the British had come to Philadelphia, but it was not easy to go away by sea. There was not room in the transports for the army and its

encumbrances. Moreover, to embark the whole force, a march of forty miles to New Castle, on the lower Delaware, would be necessary and the retreating army was sure to be harassed on its way by Washington. It would besides hardly be safe to take the army by sea for the French fleet might be strong enough to capture the flotilla.

There was nothing for it but, at whatever risk, to abandon Philadelphia and march the army across New Jersey. It would be possible to take by sea the stores and the three thousand Loyalists from Philadelphia, some of whom would probably be hanged if they should be taken. Lord Howe, the naval commander, did his part in a masterly manner. On the 18th of June the British army marched out of Philadelphia and before the day was over it was across the Delaware on the New Jersey side. That same day Washington's army, free from its long exile at Valley Forge, occupied the capital. Clinton set out on his long march by land and Howe worked his laden ships down the difficult river to its mouth and, after delay by winds, put to sea on the 28th of June. By a stroke of good fortune he sailed the two hundred miles to New York in two days and missed the great fleet of d'Estaing, carrying an army of four thousand

men. On the 8th of July d'Estaing anchored at the mouth of the Delaware. Had not his passage been unusually delayed and Howe's unusually quick, as Washington noted, the British fleet and the transports in the Delaware would probably have been taken and Clinton and his army would have shared the fate of Burgoyne.

As it was, though Howe's fleet was clear away, Clinton's army had a bad time in the march across New Jersey. Its baggage train was no less than twelve miles long and, winding along roads leading sometimes through forests, was peculiarly vulnerable to flank attack. In this type of warfare Washington excelled. He had fought over this country and he knew it well. The tragedy of Valley Forge was past. His army was now well trained and well supplied. He had about the same number of men as the British — perhaps sixteen thousand — and he was not encumbered by a long baggage train. Thus it happened that Washington was across the Delaware almost as soon as the British. He marched parallel with them on a line some five miles to the north and was able to forge towards the head of their column. He could attack their flank almost when he liked. Clinton marched with great difficulty. He found bridges down. Not

only was Washington behind him and on his flank but General Gates was in front marching from the north to attack him when he should try to cross the Raritan River. The long British column turned southeastward toward Sandy Hook, so as to lessen the menace from Gates. Between the half of the army in the van and the other half in the rear was the baggage train.

The crisis came on Sunday the 28th of June, a day of sweltering heat. By this time General Charles Lee, Washington's second in command, was in a good position to attack the British rear guard from the north, while Washington, marching three miles behind Lee, was to come up in the hope of overwhelming it from the rear. Clinton's position was difficult but he was saved by Lee's ineptitude. He had positive instructions to attack with his five thousand men and hold the British engaged until Washington should come up in overwhelming force. The young La Fayette was with Lee. He knew what Washington had ordered, but Lee said to him: "You don't know the British soldiers; we cannot stand against them." Lee's conduct looks like deliberate treachery. Instead of attacking the British he allowed them to attack him. La Fayette managed to send a message to



Washington in the rear; Washington dashed to the front and, as he came up, met soldiers flying from before the British. He rode straight to Lee, called him in flaming anger a "damned poltroon," and himself at once took command. There was a sharp fight near Monmouth Court House. The British were driven back and only the coming of night ended the struggle. Washington was preparing to renew it in the morning, but Clinton had marched away in the darkness. He reached the coast on the 30th of June, having lost on the way fifty-nine men from sunstroke, over three hundred in battle, and a great many more by desertion. The deserters were chiefly Germans, enticed by skillful offers of land. Washington called for a reckoning from Lee. He was placed under arrest, tried by court-martial, found guilty, and suspended from rank for twelve months. Ultimately he was dismissed from the American army, less it appears for his conduct at Monmouth than for his impudent demeanor toward Congress afterwards.

These events on land were quickly followed by stirring events on the sea. The delays of the British Admiralty of this time seem almost incredible. Two hundred ships waited at Spithead for three months for convoy to the West Indies,

while all the time the people of the West Indies, cut off from their usual sources of supply in America, were in distress for food. Seven weeks passed after d'Estaing had sailed for America before the Admiralty knew that he was really gone and sent Admiral Byron, with fourteen ships, to the aid of Lord Howe. When d'Estaing was already before New York Byron was still battling with storms in mid-Atlantic, storms so severe that his fleet was entirely dispersed and his flagship was alone when it reached Long Island on the 18th of August.

Meanwhile the French had a great chance. On the 11th of July their fleet, much stronger than the British, arrived from the Delaware, and anchored off Sandy Hook. Admiral Howe knew his danger. He asked for volunteers from the merchant ships and the sailors offered themselves almost to a man. If d'Estaing could beat Howe's inferior fleet, the transports at New York would be at his mercy and the British army, with no other source of supply, must surrender. Washington was near, to give help on land. The end of the war seemed not far away. But it did not come. The French admirals were often taken from an army command, and d'Estaing was not a sailor but a soldier. He feared

the skill of Howe, a really great sailor, whose seven available ships were drawn up in line at Sandy Hook so that their guns bore on ships coming in across the bar. D'Estaing hovered outside. Pilots from New York told him that at high tide there were only twenty-two feet of water on the bar and this was not enough for his great ships, one of which carried ninety-one guns. On the 22d of July there was the highest of tides with, in reality, thirty feet of water on the bar, and a wind from the northeast which would have brought d'Estaing's ships easily through the channel into the harbor. The British expected the hottest naval fight in their history. At three in the afternoon d'Estaing moved but it was to sail away out of sight.

Opportunity, though once spurned, seemed yet to knock again. The one other point held by the British was Newport, Rhode Island. Here General Pigot had five thousand men and only perilous communications by sea with New York. Washington, keenly desirous to capture this army, sent General Greene to aid General Sullivan in command at Providence, and d'Estaing arrived off Newport to give aid. Greene had fifteen hundred fine soldiers, Sullivan had nine thousand New England militia, and d'Estaing four thousand

French regulars. A force of fourteen thousand five hundred men threatened five thousand British. But on the 9th of August Howe suddenly appeared near Newport with his smaller fleet. D'Estaing put to sea to fight him, and a great naval battle was imminent, when a terrific storm blew up and separated and almost shattered both fleets. D'Estaing then, in spite of American protests, insisted on taking the French ships to Boston to refit and with them the French soldiers. Sullivan publicly denounced the French admiral as having basely deserted him and his own disgusted yeomanry left in hundreds for their farms to gather in the harvest. In September, with d'Estaing safely away, Clinton sailed into Newport with five thousand men. Washington's campaign against Rhode Island had failed completely.

The summer of 1778 thus turned out badly for Washington. Help from France which had aroused such joyous hopes in America had achieved little and the allies were hurling reproaches at each other. French and American soldiers had riotous fights in Boston and a French officer was killed. The British, meanwhile, were landing at small ports on the coast, which had been the haunts of privateers, and were not only burning shipping

and stores but were devastating the country with Loyalist regiments recruited in America. The French told the Americans that they were expecting too much from the alliance, and the cautious Washington expressed fear that help from outside would relax effort at home. Both were right. By the autumn the British had been reinforced and the French fleet had gone to the West Indies. Truly the mountain in labor of the French alliance seemed to have brought forth only a ridiculous mouse. None the less was it to prove, in the end, the decisive factor in the struggle.

The alliance with France altered the whole character of the war, which ceased now to be merely a war in North America. France soon gained an ally in Europe. Bourbon Spain had no thought of helping the colonies in rebellion against their king, and she viewed their ambitions to extend westward with jealous concern, since she desired for herself both sides of the Mississippi. Spain, however, had a grievance against Britain, for Britain would not yield Gibraltar, that rocky fragment of Spain commanding the entrance to the Mediterranean which Britain had wrested from her as she had wrested also Minorca and Florida.

So, in April, 1779, Spain joined France in war on Great Britain. France agreed not only to furnish an army for the invasion of England but never to make peace until Britain had handed back Gibraltar. The allies planned to seize and hold the Isle of Wight. England has often been threatened and yet has been so long free from the tramp of hostile armies that we are tempted to dismiss lightly such dangers. But in the summer of 1779 the danger was real. Of warships carrying fifty guns or more France and Spain together had one hundred and twenty-one, while Britain had seventy. The British Channel fleet for the defense of home coasts numbered forty ships of the line while France and Spain together had sixty-six. Nor had Britain resources in any other quarter upon which she could readily draw. In the West Indies she had twenty-one ships of the line while France had twenty-five. The British could not find comfort in any supposed superiority in the structure of their ships. Then and later, as Nelson admitted when he was fighting Spain, the Spanish ships were better built than the British.

Lurking in the background to haunt British thought was the growing American navy. John Paul was a Scots sailor, who had been a slave trader

and subsequently master of a West India merchantman, and on going to America had assumed the name of Jones. He was a man of boundless ambition, vanity, and vigor, and when he commanded American privateers he became a terror to the maritime people from whom he sprang. In the summer of 1779 when Jones, with a squadron of four ships, was haunting the British coasts, every harbor was nervous. At Plymouth a boom blocked the entrance, but other places had not even this defense. Sir Walter Scott has described how, on September 17, 1779, a squadron, under John Paul Jones, came within gunshot of Leith, the port of Edinburgh. The whole surrounding country was alarmed, since for two days the squadron had been in sight beating up the Firth of Forth. A sudden squall, which drove Jones back, probably saved Edinburgh from being plundered. A few days later Jones was burning ships in the Humber and, on the 23d of September, he met off Flamborough Head and, after a desperate fight, captured two British armed ships: the *Serapis*, a 40-gun vessel newly commissioned, and the *Countess of Scarborough*, carrying 20 guns, both of which were convoying a fleet. The fame of his exploit rang through Europe. Jones was a regularly



commissioned officer in the navy of the United States, but neutral powers, such as Holland, had not yet recognized the republic and to them there was no American navy. The British regarded him as a traitor and pirate and might possibly have hanged him had he fallen into their hands.

Terrible days indeed were these for distracted England. In India, France, baulked twenty years earlier, was working for her entire overthrow, and in North Africa, Spain was using the Moors to the same end. As time passed the storm grew more violent. Before the year 1780 ended Holland had joined England's enemies. Moreover, the northern states of Europe, angry at British interference on the sea with their trade, and especially at her seizure of ships trying to enter blockaded ports, took strong measures. On March 8, 1780, Russia issued a proclamation declaring that neutral ships must be allowed to come and go on the sea as they liked. They might be searched by a nation at war for arms and ammunition but for nothing else. It would moreover be illegal to declare a blockade of a port and punish neutrals for violating it, unless their ships were actually caught in an attempt to enter the port. Denmark and Sweden joined Russia in what was known as the Armed Neutrality and

promised that they would retaliate upon any nation which did not respect the conditions laid down.

In domestic affairs Great Britain was divided. The Whigs and Tories were carrying on a warfare shameless beyond even the bitter partisan strife of later days. In Parliament the Whigs cheered at military defeats which might serve to discredit the Tory Government. The navy was torn by faction. When, in 1778, the Whig Admiral Keppel fought an indecisive naval battle off Ushant and was afterwards accused by one of his officers, Sir Hugh Palliser, of not pressing the enemy hard enough, party passion was invoked. The Whigs were for Keppel, the Tories for Palliser, and the London mob was Whig. When Keppel was acquitted there were riotous demonstrations; the house of Palliser was wrecked, and he himself barely escaped with his life. Whig naval officers declared that they had no chance of fair treatment at the hands of a Tory Admiralty, and Lord Howe, among others, now refused to serve. For a time British supremacy on the sea disappeared and it was only regained in April, 1782, when the Tory Admiral Rodney won a great victory in the West Indies against the French.

A spirit of violence was abroad in England. The

disabilities of the Roman Catholics were a gross scandal. They might not vote or hold public office. Yet when, in 1780, Parliament passed a bill removing some of their burdens dreadful riots broke out in London. A fanatic, Lord George Gordon, led a mob to Westminster and, as Dr. Johnson expressed it, "insulted" both Houses of Parliament. The cowed ministry did nothing to check the disturbance. The mob burned Newgate jail, released the prisoners from this and other prisons, and made a deliberate attempt to destroy London by fire. Order was restored under the personal direction of the King, who, with all his faults, was no coward. At the same time the Irish Parliament, under Protestant lead, was making a Declaration of Independence which, in 1782, England was obliged to admit by formal act of Parliament. For the time being, though the two monarchies had the same king, Ireland, in name at least, was free of England.

Washington's enemy thus had embarrassments enough. Yet these very years, 1779 and 1780, were the years in which he came nearest to despair. The strain of a great movement is not in the early days of enthusiasm, but in the slow years when idealism is tempered by the strife of opinion and

self-interest which brings delay and disillusion. As the war went on recruiting became steadily more difficult. The alliance with France actually worked to discourage it since it was felt that the cause was safe in the hands of this powerful ally. Whatever Great Britain's difficulties about finance they were light compared with Washington's. In time the "continental dollar" was worth only two cents. Yet soldiers long had to take this money at its face value for their pay, with the result that the pay for three months would scarcely buy a pair of boots. There is little wonder that more than once Washington had to face formidable mutiny among his troops. The only ones on whom he could rely were the regulars enlisted by Congress and carefully trained. The worth of the militia, he said, "depends entirely on the prospects of the day; if favorable, they throng to you; if not, they will not move." They played a chief part in the prosperous campaign of 1777, when Burgoyne was beaten. In the next year, before Newport, they wholly failed General Sullivan and deserted shamelessly to their homes.

By 1779 the fighting had shifted to the South. Washington personally remained in the North to guard the Hudson and to watch the British in

New York. He sent La Fayette to France in January, 1779, there to urge not merely naval but military aid on a great scale. La Fayette came back after an absence of a little over a year and in the end France promised eight thousand men who should be under Washington's control as completely as if they were American soldiers. The older nation accepted the principle that the officers in the younger nation which she was helping should rank in their grade before her own. It was a magnanimity reciprocated nearly a century and a half later when a great American army in Europe was placed under the supreme command of a Marshal of France.

## CHAPTER IX

### THE WAR IN THE SOUTH

AFTER 1778 there was no more decisive fighting in the North. The British plan was to hold New York and keep there a threatening force, but to make the South henceforth the central arena of the war. Accordingly, in 1779, they evacuated Rhode Island and left the magnificent harbor of Newport to be the chief base for the French fleet and army in America. They also drew in their posts on the Hudson and left Washington free to strengthen West Point and other defenses by which he was blocking the river. Meanwhile they were striking staggering blows in the South. On December 29, 1778, a British force landed two miles below Savannah, in Georgia, lying near the mouth of the important Savannah River, and by nightfall, after some sharp fighting, took the place with its stores and shipping. Augusta, the capital of Georgia, lay about a hundred and twenty-five miles up the

river. By the end of February, 1779, the British not only held Augusta but had established so strong a line of posts in the interior that Georgia seemed to be entirely under their control.

Then followed a singular chain of events. Ever since hostilities had begun, in 1775, the revolutionary party had been dominant in the South. Yet now again in 1779 the British flag floated over the capital of Georgia. Some rejoiced and some mourned. Men do not change lightly their political allegiance. Probably Boston was the most completely revolutionary of American towns. Yet even in Boston there had been a sad procession of exiles who would not turn against the King. The South had been more evenly divided. Now the Loyalists took heart and began to assert themselves.

When the British seemed secure in Georgia bands of Loyalists marched into the British camp in furious joy that now their day was come, and gave no gentle advice as to the crushing of rebellion. Many a patriot farmhouse was now destroyed and the hapless owner either killed or driven to the mountains to live as best he could by hunting. Sometimes even the children were shot down. It so happened that a company of militia captured a large band of Loyalists marching to Augusta to



support the British cause. Here was the occasion for the republican patriots to assert their principles. To them these Loyalists were guilty of treason. Accordingly seventy of the prisoners were tried before a civil court and five of them were hanged. For this hanging of prisoners the Loyalists, of course, retaliated in kind. Both the British and American regular officers tried to restrain these fierce passions but the spirit of the war in the South was ruthless. To this day many a tale of horror is repeated and, since Loyalist opinion was finally destroyed, no one survived to apportion blame to their enemies. It is probable that each side matched the other in barbarity.

The British hoped to sweep rapidly through the South, to master it up to the borders of Virginia, and then to conquer that breeding ground of revolution. In the spring of 1779 General Prevost marched from Georgia into South Carolina. On the 12th of May he was before Charleston demanding surrender. We are astonished now to read that, in response to Prevost's demand, a proposal was made that South Carolina should be allowed to remain neutral and that at the end of the war it should join the victorious side. This certainly indicates a large body of opinion which

was not irreconcilable with Great Britain and seems to justify the hope of the British that the beginnings of military success might rally the mass of the people to their side. For the moment, however, Charleston did not surrender. The resistance was so stiff that Prevost had to raise the siege and go back to Savannah.

Suddenly, early in September, 1779, the French fleet under d'Estaing appeared before Savannah. It had come from the West Indies, partly to avoid the dreaded hurricane season of the autumn in those waters. The British, practically without any naval defense, were confronted at once by twenty-two French ships of the line, eleven frigates, and many transports carrying an army. The great flotilla easily got rid of the few British ships lying at Savannah. An American army, under General Lincoln, marched to join d'Estaing. The French landed some three thousand men, and the combined army numbered about six thousand. A siege began which, it seemed, could end in only one way. Prevost, however, with three thousand seven hundred men, nearly half of them sick, was defiant, and on the 9th of October the combined French and American armies made a great assault. They met with disaster. D'Estaing was severely wounded.

With losses of some nine hundred killed and wounded in the bitter fighting the assailants drew off and soon raised the siege. The British losses were only fifty-four. In the previous year French and Americans fighting together had utterly failed. Now they had failed again and there was bitter recrimination between the defeated allies. D'Estaing sailed away and soon lost some of his ships in a violent storm. Ill-fortune pursued him to the end. He served no more in the war and in the Reign of Terror in Paris, in 1794, he perished on the scaffold.

At Charleston the American General Lincoln was in command with about six thousand men. The place, named after King Charles II, had been a center of British influence before the war. That critical traveler, Lord Adam Gordon, thought its people clever in business, courteous, and hospitable. Most of them, he says, made a visit to England at some time during life and it was the fashion to send there the children to be educated. Obviously Charleston was fitted to be a British rallying center in the South; yet it had remained in American hands since the opening of the war. In 1776 Sir Henry Clinton, the British Commander, had woefully failed in his assault on Charleston.

Now in December, 1779, he sailed from New York to make a renewed effort. With him were three of his best officers — Cornwallis, Simcoe, and Tarleton, the last two skillful leaders of irregulars, recruited in America and used chiefly for raids. The wintry voyage was rough; one of the vessels laden with cannon foundered and sank, and all the horses died. But Clinton reached Charleston and was able to surround it on the landward side with an army at least ten thousand strong. Tarleton's irregulars rode through the country. It is on record that he marched sixty-four miles in twenty-three hours and a hundred and five miles in fifty-four hours. Such mobility was irresistible. On the 12th of April, after a ride of thirty miles, Tarleton surprised, in the night, three regiments of American cavalry regulars at a place called Biggin's Bridge, routed them completely and, according to his own account, with the loss of three men wounded, carried off a hundred prisoners, four hundred horses, and also stores and ammunition. There is no doubt that Tarleton's dragoons behaved with great brutality and it would perhaps have taught a needed lesson if, as was indeed threatened by a British officer, Major Ferguson, a few of them had been shot on the spot for these

outrages. Tarleton's dashing attacks isolated Charleston and there was nothing for Lincoln to do but to surrender. This he did on the 12th of May. Burgoyne seemed to have been avenged. The most important city in the South had fallen. "We look on America as at our feet," wrote Horace Walpole. The British advanced boldly into the interior. On the 29th of May Tarleton attacked an American force under Colonel Buford, killed over a hundred men, carried off two hundred prisoners, and had only twenty-one casualties. It is such scenes that reveal the true character of the war in the South. Above all it was a war of hard riding, often in the night, of sudden attack, and terrible bloodshed.

After the fall of Charleston only a few American irregulars were to be found in South Carolina. It and Georgia seemed safe in British control. With British successes came the problem of governing the South. On the royalist theory, the recovered land had been in a state of rebellion and was now restored to its true allegiance. Every one who had taken up arms against the King was guilty of treason with death as the penalty. Clinton had no intention of applying this hard theory, but he was returning to New York and he had to establish a

government on some legal basis. During the first years of the war, Loyalists who would not accept the new order had been punished with great severity. Their day had now come. Clinton said that "every good man" must be ready to join in arms the King's troops in order "to reestablish peace and good government." "Wicked and desperate men" who still opposed the King should be punished with rigor and have their property confiscated. He offered pardon for past offenses, except to those who had taken part in killing Loyalists "under the mock forms of justice." No one was henceforth to be exempted from the active duty of supporting the King's authority.

Clinton's proclamation was very disturbing to the large element in South Carolina which did not desire to fight on either side. Every one must now be for or against the King, and many were in their secret hearts resolved to be against him. There followed an orgy of bloodshed which discredits human nature. The patriots fled to the mountains rather than yield and, in their turn, waylaid and murdered straggling Loyalists. Under pressure some republicans would give outward compliance to royal government, but they could not be coerced into a real loyalty. It required only a reverse to

the King's forces to make them again actively hostile. To meet the difficult situation Congress now made a disastrous blunder. On June 13, 1780, General Gates, the belauded victor at Saratoga, was given the command in the South.

Camden, on the Wateree River, lies inland from Charleston about a hundred and twenty-five miles as the crow flies. The British had occupied it soon after the fall of Charleston, and it was now held by a small force under Lord Rawdon, one of the ablest of the British commanders. Gates had superior numbers and could probably have taken Camden by a rapid movement; but the man had no real stomach for fighting. He delayed until, on the 14th of August, Cornwallis arrived at Camden with reinforcements and with the fixed resolve to attack Gates before Gates attacked him. On the early morning of the 16th of August, Cornwallis with two thousand men marching northward between swamps on both flanks, met Gates with three thousand marching southward, each of them intending to surprise the other. A fierce struggle followed. Gates was completely routed with a thousand casualties, a thousand prisoners, and the loss of nearly the whole of his guns and transport. The fleeing army was pursued for twenty miles by



the relentless Tarleton. General Kalb, who had done much to organize the American army, was killed. The enemies of Gates jeered at his riding away with the fugitives and hardly drawing rein until after four days he was at Hillsborough, two hundred miles away. His defense was that he "proceeded with all possible despatch," which he certainly did, to the nearest point where he could reorganize his forces. His career was, however, ended. He was deprived of his command, and Washington appointed to succeed him General Nathanael Greene.

In spite of the headlong flight of Gates the disaster at Camden had only a transient effect. The war developed a number of irregular leaders on the American side who were never beaten beyond recovery, no matter what might be the reverses of the day. The two most famous are Francis Marion and Thomas Sumter. Marion, descended from a family of Huguenot exiles, was slight in frame and courteous in manner; Sumter, tall, powerful, and rough, was the vigorous frontiersman in type. Threatened men live long: Sumter died in 1832, at the age of ninety-six, the last surviving general of the Revolution. Both men had had prolonged experience in frontier fighting against the Indians.

Tarleton called Marion the "old swamp fox" because he often escaped through using by-paths across the great swamps of the country. British communications were always in danger. A small British force might find itself in the midst of a host which had suddenly come together as an army, only to dissolve next day into its elements of hardy farmers, woodsmen, and mountaineers.

After the victory at Camden Cornwallis advanced into North Carolina, and sent Major Ferguson, one of his most trusted officers, with a force of about a thousand men, into the mountainous country lying westward, chiefly to secure Loyalist recruits. If attacked in force Ferguson was to retreat and rejoin his leader. The Battle of King's Mountain is hardly famous in the annals of the world, and yet, in some ways, it was a decisive event. Suddenly Ferguson found himself beset by hostile bands, coming from the north, the south, the east, and the west. When, in obedience to his orders, he tried to retreat he found the way blocked, and his messages were intercepted, so that Cornwallis was not aware of the peril. Ferguson, harassed, outnumbered, at last took refuge on King's Mountain, a stony ridge on the western border between the two Carolinas. The north side

of the mountain was a sheer impassable cliff and, since the ridge was only half a mile long, Ferguson thought that his force could hold it securely. He was, however, fighting an enemy deadly with the rifle and accustomed to fire from cover. The sides and top of King's Mountain were wooded and strewn with boulders. The motley assailants crept up to the crest while pouring a deadly fire on any of the defenders who exposed themselves. Ferguson was killed and in the end his force surrendered, on October 7, 1780, with four hundred casualties and the loss of more than seven hundred prisoners. The American casualties were eighty-eight. In reprisal for earlier acts on the other side, the victors insulted the dead body of Ferguson and hanged nine of their prisoners on the limb of a great tulip tree. Then the improvised army scattered.<sup>1</sup>

While the conflict for supremacy in the South was still uncertain, in the Northwest the Americans made a stroke destined to have astounding results. Virginia had long coveted lands in the valleys of the Ohio and the Mississippi. It was in this region that Washington had first seen active service, helping to wrest that land from France. The

<sup>1</sup> See Chapter IX, *Pioneers of the Old Southwest*, by Constance Lindsay Skinner in *The Chronicles of America*.

country was wild. There was almost no settlement; but over a few forts on the upper Mississippi and in the regions lying eastward to the Detroit River there was that flicker of a red flag which meant that the Northwest was under British rule. George Rogers Clark, like Washington a Virginian land surveyor, was a strong, reckless, brave frontiersman. Early in 1778 Virginia gave him a small sum of money, made him a lieutenant colonel, and authorized him to raise troops for a western adventure. He had less than two hundred men when he appeared a little later at Kaskaskia near the Mississippi in what is now Illinois and captured the small British garrison, with the friendly consent of the French settlers about the fort. He did the same thing at Cahokia, farther up the river. The French scattered through the western country naturally sided with the Americans, fighting now in alliance with France. The British sent out a force from Detroit to try to check the efforts of Clark, but in February, 1779, the indomitable frontiersman surprised and captured this force at Vincennes on the Wabash. Thus did Clark's two hundred famished and ragged men take possession of the Northwest, and, when peace was made, this vast domain, an empire in extent, fell to the United

States. Clark's exploit is one of the pregnant romances of history.<sup>1</sup>

Perhaps the most sorrowful phase of the Revolution was the internal conflict waged between its friends and its enemies in America, where neighbor fought against neighbor. During this pitiless struggle the strength of the Loyalists tended steadily to decline; and they came at last to be regarded everywhere by triumphant revolution as a vile people who should bear the penalties of outcasts. In this attitude towards them Boston had given a lead which the rest of the country eagerly followed. To coerce Loyalists local committees sprang up everywhere. It must be said that the Loyalists gave abundant provocation. They sneered at rebel officers of humble origin as convicts and shoe-blacks. There should be some fine hanging, they promised, on the return of the King's men to Boston. Early in the Revolution British colonial governors, like Lord Dunmore of Virginia, adopted the policy of reducing the rebels by harrying their coasts. Sailors would land at night from ships and commit their ravages in the light of burning houses. Soldiers would dart out beyond the British lines,

<sup>1</sup> See Chapters III and IV in *The Old Northwest* by Frederic Austin Ogg in *The Chronicles of America*.

burn a village, carry off some Whig farmers, and escape before opposing forces could rally. Governor Tryon of New York was specially active in these enterprises and to this day a special odium attaches to his name.

For these ravages, and often with justice, the Loyalists were held responsible. The result was a bitterness which fired even the calm spirit of Benjamin Franklin and led him when the day came for peace to declare that the plundering and murdering adherents of King George were the ones who should pay for damage and not the States which had confiscated Loyalist property. Lists of Loyalist names were sometimes posted and then the persons concerned were likely to be the victims of any one disposed to mischief. Sometimes a suspected Loyalist would find an effigy hung on a tree before his own door with a hint that next time the figure might be himself. A musket ball might come whizzing through his window. Many a Loyalist was stripped, plunged in a barrel of tar, and then rolled in feathers, taken sometimes from his own bed.

Punishment for loyalism was not, however, left merely to chance. Even before the Declaration of Independence, Congress, sitting itself in a city

where loyalism was strong, urged the States to act sternly in repressing Loyalist opinion. They did not obey every urging of Congress as eagerly as they responded to this one. In practically every State Test Acts were passed and no one was safe who did not carry a certificate that he was free of any suspicion of loyalty to King George. Magistrates were paid a fee for these certificates and thus had a golden reason for insisting that Loyalists should possess them. To secure a certificate the holder must forswear allegiance to the King and promise support to the State at war with him. An unguarded word even about the value in gold of the continental dollar might lead to the adding of the speaker's name to the list of the proscribed. Legislatures passed bills denouncing Loyalists. The names in Massachusetts read like a list of the leading families of New England. The "Black List" of Pennsylvania contained four hundred and ninety names of Loyalists charged with treason, and Philadelphia had the grim experience of seeing two Loyalists led to the scaffold with ropes around their necks and hanged. Most of the persecuted Loyalists lost all their property and remained exiles from their former homes. The self-appointed committees took in hand the task of disciplining



those who did not fly, and the rabble often pushed matters to brutal extremes. When we remember that Washington himself regarded Tories as the vilest of mankind and unfit to live, we can imagine the spirit of mobs, which had sometimes the further incentive of greed for Loyalist property. Loyalists had the experience of what we now call boycotting when they could not buy or sell in the shops and were forced to see their own shops plundered. Mills would not grind their corn. Their cattle were maimed and poisoned. They could not secure payment of debts due to them or, if payment was made, they received it in the debased continental currency at its face value. They might not sue in a court of law, nor sell their property, nor make a will. It was a felony for them to keep arms. No Loyalist might hold office, or practice law or medicine, or keep a school.

Some Loyalists were deported to the wilderness in the back country. Many took refuge within the British lines, especially at New York. Many Loyalists created homes elsewhere. Some went to England only to find melancholy disillusion of hope that a grateful motherland would understand and reward their sacrifices. Large numbers found their way to Nova Scotia and to Canada, north of the

Great Lakes, and there played a part in laying the foundation of the Dominion of today. The city of Toronto with a population of half a million is rooted in the Loyalist traditions of its Tory founders. Simcoe, the first Governor of Upper Canada, who made Toronto his capital, was one of the most enterprising of the officers who served with Cornwallis in the South and surrendered with him at Yorktown.

The State of New York acquired from the forfeited lands of Loyalists a sum approaching four million dollars, a great amount in those days. Other States profited in a similar way. Every Loyalist whose property was seized had a direct and personal grievance. He could join the British army and fight against his oppressors, and this he did: New York furnished about fifteen thousand men to fight on the British side. Plundered himself, he could plunder his enemies, and this too he did both by land and sea. In the autumn of 1778 ships manned chiefly by Loyalist refugees were terrorizing the coast from Massachusetts to New Jersey. They plundered Martha's Vineyard, burned some lesser towns, such as New Bedford, and showed no quarter to small parties of American troops whom they managed to intercept.

What happened on the coast happened also in the interior. At Wyoming in the northeastern part of Pennsylvania, in July, 1778, during a raid of Loyalists, aided by Indians, there was a brutal massacre, the horrors of which long served to inspire hate for the British. A little later in the same year similar events took place at Cherry Valley, in central New York. Burning houses, the dead bodies not only of men but of women and children scalped by the savage allies of the Loyalists, desolation and ruin in scenes once peaceful and happy — such horrors American patriotism learned to associate with the Loyalists. These in their turn remembered the slow martyrdom of their lives as social outcasts, the threats and plunder which in the end forced them to fly, the hardships, starvation, and death to their loved ones which were wont to follow. The conflict is perhaps the most tragic and irreconcilable in the whole story of the Revolution.

## CHAPTER X

### FRANCE TO THE RESCUE

DURING 1778 and 1779 French effort had failed. Now France resolved to do something decisive. She never sent across the sea the eight thousand men promised to La Fayette but by the spring of 1780 about this number were gathered at Brest to find that transport was inadequate. The leader was a French noble, the Comte de Rochambeau, an old campaigner, now in his fifty-fifth year, who had fought against England before in the Seven Years' War and had then been opposed by Clinton, Cornwallis, and Lord George Germain. He was a sound and prudent soldier who shares with La Fayette the chief glory of the French service in America. Rochambeau had fought at the second battle of Minden, where the father of La Fayette had fallen, and he had for the ardent young Frenchman the amiable regard of a father and sometimes rebuked his impulsiveness in that spirit. He studied the

problem in America with the insight of a trained leader. Before he left France he made the pregnant comment on the outlook: "Nothing without naval supremacy." About the same time Washington was writing to La Fayette that a decisive naval supremacy was a fundamental need.

A gallant company it was which gathered at Brest. Probably no other land than France could have sent forth on a crusade for democratic liberty a band of aristocrats who had little thought of applying to their own land the principles for which they were ready to fight in America. Over some of them hung the shadow of the guillotine; others were to ride the storm of the French Revolution and to attain fame which should surpass their sanguine dreams. Rochambeau himself, though he narrowly escaped during the Reign of Terror, lived to extreme old age and died a Marshal of France. Berthier, one of his officers, became one of Napoleon's marshals and died just when Napoleon, whom he had deserted, returned from Elba. Dumas became another of Napoleon's generals. He nearly perished in the retreat from Moscow but lived, like Rochambeau, to extreme old age. One of the gayest of the company was the Duc de Lauzun, a noted libertine in France but, as far as

the record goes, a man of blameless propriety in America. He died on the scaffold during the French Revolution. So, too, did his companion, the Prince de Broglie, in spite of the protest of his last words that he was faithful to the principles of the Revolution, some of which he had learned in America. Another companion was the Swedish Count Fersen, later the devoted friend of the unfortunate Queen Marie Antoinette, the driver of the carriage in which the royal family made the famous flight to Varennes in 1791, and himself destined to be trampled to death by a Swedish mob in 1810. Other old and famous names there were: Laval-Montmorency, Mirabeau, Talleyrand, Saint-Simon. It has been said that the names of the French officers in America read like a list of medieval heroes in the Chronicles of Froissart.

Only half of the expected ships were ready at Brest and only five thousand five hundred men could embark. The vessels were, of course, very crowded. Rochambeau cut down the space allowed for personal effects. He took no horse for himself and would allow none to go, but he permitted a few dogs. Forty-five ships set sail, "a truly imposing sight," said one of those on board. We have reports of their *ennui* on the long voyage of seventy

days, of their amusements and their devotions, for twice daily were prayers read on deck. They sailed into Newport on the 11th of July and the inhabitants of that still primitive spot illuminated their houses as best they could. Then the army settled down at Newport and there it remained for many weary months. Reinforcements never came, partly through mismanagement in France, partly through the vigilance of the British fleet, which was on guard before Brest. The French had been for generations the deadly enemies of the English Colonies and some of the French officers noted the reserve with which they were received. The ice was, however, soon broken. They brought with them gold, and the New England merchants liked this relief from the debased continental currency. Some of the New England ladies were beautiful, and the experienced Lauzun expresses glowing admiration for a prim Quakeress whose simple dress he thought more attractive than the elaborate modes of Paris.

The French dazzled the ragged American army by their display of waving plumes and of uniforms in striking colors. They wondered at the quantities of tea drunk by their friends and so do we when we remember the political hatred for tea. They



made the blunder common in Europe of thinking that there were no social distinctions in America. Washington could have told him a different story. Intercourse was at first difficult, for few of the Americans spoke French and fewer still of the French spoke English. Sometimes the talk was in Latin, pronounced by an American scholar as not too bad. A French officer writing in Latin to an American friend announces his intention to learn English: "*Inglicam linguam noscere conabor.*" He made the effort and he and his fellow officers learned a quaint English speech. When Rochambeau and Washington first met they conversed through La Fayette, as interpreter, but in time the older man did very well in the language of his American comrade in arms.

For a long time the French army effected nothing. Washington longed to attack New York and urged the effort, but the wise and experienced Rochambeau applied his principle, "nothing without naval supremacy," and insisted that in such an attack a powerful fleet should act with a powerful army, and, for the moment, the French had no powerful fleet available. The British were blockading in Narragansett Bay the French fleet which lay there. Had the French army moved away

from Newport their fleet would almost certainly have become a prey to the British. For the moment there was nothing to do but to wait. The French preserved an admirable discipline. Against their army there are no records of outrage and plunder such as we have against the German allies of the British. We must remember, however, that the French were serving in the country of their friends, with every restraint of good feeling which this involved. Rochambeau told his men that there must not be the theft of a bit of wood, or of any vegetables, or of even a sheaf of straw. He threatened the vice which he called "sonorous drunkenness," and even lack of cleanliness, with sharp punishment. The result was that a month after landing he could say that not a cabbage had been stolen. Our credulity is strained when we are told that apple trees with their fruit overhung the tents of his soldiers and remained untouched. Thousands flocked to see the French camp. The bands played and Puritan maidens of all grades of society danced with the young French officers and we are told, whether we believe it or not, that there was the simple innocence of the Garden of Eden. The zeal of the French officers and the friendly disposition of the men never failed. There had

been bitter quarrels in 1778 and 1779 and now the French were careful to be on their good behavior in America. Rochambeau had been instructed to place himself under the command of Washington, to whom were given the honors of a Marshal of France. The French admiral, had, however, been given no such instructions and Washington had no authority over the fleet.

Meanwhile events were happening which might have brought a British triumph. On September 14, 1780, there arrived and anchored at Sandy Hook, New York, fourteen British ships of the line under Rodney, the doughtiest of the British admirals afloat. Washington, with his army headquarters at West Point, on guard to keep the British from advancing up the Hudson, was looking for the arrival, not of a British fleet, but of a French fleet, from the West Indies. For him these were very dark days. The recent defeat at Camden was a crushing blow. Congress was inept and had in it men, as the patient General Greene said, "without principles, honor or modesty." The coming of the British fleet was a new and overwhelming discouragement, and, on the 18th of September, Washington left West Point for a long

ride to Hartford in Connecticut, half way between the two headquarters, there to take counsel with the French general. Rochambeau, it was said, had been purposely created to understand Washington, but as yet the two leaders had not met. It is the simple truth that Washington had to go to the French as a beggar. Rochambeau said later that Washington was afraid to reveal the extent of his distress. He had to ask for men and for ships, but he had also to ask for what a proud man dislikes to ask, for money from the stranger who had come to help him.

The Hudson had long been the chief object of Washington's anxiety and now it looked as if the British intended some new movement up the river, as indeed they did. Clinton had not expected Rodney's squadron, but it arrived opportunely and, when it sailed up to New York from Sandy Hook, on the 16th of September, he began at once to embark his army, taking pains at the same time to send out reports that he was going to the Chesapeake. Washington concluded that the opposite was true and that he was likely to be going northward. At West Point, where the Hudson flows through a mountainous gap, Washington had strong defenses on both shores of the river. His

batteries commanded its whole width, but shore batteries were ineffective against moving ships. The embarking of Clinton's army meant that he planned operations on land. He might be going to Rhode Island or to Boston but he might also dash up the Hudson. It was an anxious leader who, with La Fayette and Alexander Hamilton, rode away from headquarters to Hartford.

The officer in command at West Point was Benedict Arnold. No general on the American side had a more brilliant record or could show more scars of battle. We have seen him leading an army through the wilderness to Quebec, and incurring hardships almost incredible. Later he is found on Lake Champlain, fighting on both land and water. When in the next year the Americans succeeded at Saratoga it was Arnold who bore the brunt of the fighting. At Quebec and again at Saratoga he was severely wounded. In the summer of 1778 he was given the command at Philadelphia, after the British evacuation. It was a troubled time. Arnold was concerned with confiscations of property for treason and with disputes about ownership. Impulsive, ambitious, and with a certain element of coarseness in his nature, he made enemies. He was involved in bitter strife with both Congress

and the State government of Pennsylvania. After a period of tension and privation in war, one of slackness and luxury is almost certain to follow. Philadelphia, which had recently suffered for want of bare necessities, now relapsed into gay indulgence. Arnold lived extravagantly. He played a conspicuous part in society and, a widower of thirty-five, was successful in paying court to Miss Shippen, a young lady of twenty, with whom, as Washington said, all the American officers were in love.

Malignancy was rampant and Arnold was pursued with great bitterness. Joseph Reed, the President of the Executive Council of Pennsylvania, not only brought charge against him of abusing his position for his own advantage, but also laid the charges before each State government. In the end Arnold was tried by court-martial and after long and inexcusable delay, on January 26, 1780, he was acquitted of everything but the imprudence of using, in an emergency, public wagons to remove private property, and of granting irregularly a pass to a ship to enter the port of Philadelphia. Yet the court ordered that for these trifles Arnold should receive a public reprimand from the Commander-in-Chief. Washington gave

the reprimand in terms as gentle as possible, and when, in July, 1780, Arnold asked for the important command at West Point, Washington readily complied probably with relief that so important a position should be in such good hands.

The treason of Arnold now came rapidly to a head. The man was embittered. He had rendered great services and yet had been persecuted with spiteful persistence. The truth seems to be, too, that Arnold thought America ripe for reconciliation with Great Britain. He dreamed that he might be the saviour of his country. Monk had reconciled the English republic to the restored Stuart King Charles II; Arnold might reconcile the American republic to George III for the good of both. That reconciliation he believed was widely desired in America. He tried to persuade himself that to change sides in this civil strife was no more culpable than to turn from one party to another in political life. He forgot, however, that it is never honorable to betray a trust.

It is almost certain that Arnold received a large sum in money for his treachery. However this may be, there was treason in his heart when he asked for and received the command at West Point, and he intended to use his authority to surrender



that vital post to the British. And now on the 18th of September Washington was riding north-eastward into Connecticut, British troops were on board ships in New York and all was ready. On the 20th of September the *Vulture*, sloop of war, sailed up the Hudson from New York and anchored at Stony Point, a few miles below West Point. On board the *Vulture* was the British officer who was treating with Arnold and who now came to arrange terms with him, Major John André, Clinton's young adjutant general, a man of attractive personality. Under cover of night Arnold sent off a boat to bring André ashore to a remote thicket of fir trees, outside the American lines. There the final plans were made. The British fleet, carrying an army, was to sail up the river. A heavy chain had been placed across the river at West Point to bar the way of hostile ships. Under pretense of repairs a link was to be taken out and replaced by a rope which would break easily. The defenses of West Point were to be so arranged that they could not meet a sudden attack and Arnold was to surrender with his force of three thousand men. Such a blow following the disasters at Charleston and Camden might end the strife. Britain was prepared to yield everything but

separation; and America, Arnold said, could now make an honorable peace.

A chapter of accidents prevented the testing. Had André been rowed ashore by British tars they could have taken him back to the ship at his command before daylight. As it was the American boatmen, suspicious perhaps of the meaning of this talk at midnight between an American officer and a British officer, both of them in uniform, refused to row André back to the ship because their own return would be dangerous in daylight. Contrary to his instructions and wishes André accompanied Arnold to a house within the American lines to wait until he could be taken off under cover of night. Meanwhile, however, an American battery on shore, angry at the *Vulture*, lying defiantly within range, opened fire upon her and she dropped down stream some miles. This was alarming. Arnold, however, arranged with a man to row André down the river and about midday went back to West Point.

It was uncertain how far the *Vulture* had gone. The vigilance of those guarding the river was aroused and André's guide insisted that he should go to the British lines by land. He was carrying compromising papers and wearing civilian dress

when seized by an American party and held under close arrest. Arnold meanwhile, ignorant of this delay, was waiting for the expected advance up the river of the British fleet. He learned of the arrest of André while at breakfast on the morning of the twenty-fifth, waiting to be joined by Washington, who had just ridden in from Hartford. Arnold received the startling news with extraordinary composure, finished the subject under discussion, and then left the table under pretext of a summons from across the river. Within a few minutes his barge was moving swiftly to the *Vulture* eighteen miles away. Thus Arnold escaped. The unhappy André was hanged as a spy on the 2d of October. He met his fate bravely. Washington, it is said, shed tears at its stern necessity under military law. Forty years later the bones of André were reburied in Westminster Abbey, a tribute of pity for a fine officer.

The treason of Arnold is not in itself important, yet Washington wrote with deep conviction that Providence had directly intervened to save the American cause. Arnold might be only one of many. Washington said, indeed, that it was a wonder there were not more. In a civil war every one of importance is likely to have ties with both

sides, regrets for the friends he has lost, misgivings in respect to the course he has adopted. In April, 1779, Arnold had begun his treason by expressing discontent at the alliance with France then working so disastrously. His future lay before him; he was still under forty; he had just married into a family of position; he expected that both he and his descendants would spend their lives in America and he must have known that contempt would follow them for the conduct which he planned if it was regarded by public opinion as base. Voices in Congress, too, had denounced the alliance with France as alliance with tyranny, political and religious. Members praised the liberties of England and had declared that the Declaration of Independence must be revoked and that now it could be done with honor since the Americans had proved their metal. There was room for the fear that the morale of the Americans was giving way.

The defection of Arnold might also have military results. He had bargained to be made a general in the British army and he had intimate knowledge of the weak points in Washington's position. He advised the British that if they would do two things, offer generous terms to soldiers serving in the American army, and concentrate their effort,

they could win the war. With a cynical knowledge of the weaker side of human nature, he declared that it was too expensive a business to bring men from England to serve in America. They could be secured more cheaply in America; it would be necessary only to pay them better than Washington could pay his army. As matters stood the Continental troops were to have half pay for seven years after the close of the war and grants of land ranging from one hundred acres for a private to eleven hundred acres for a general. Make better offers than this, urged Arnold; "Money will go farther than arms in America." If the British would concentrate on the Hudson where the defenses were weak they could drive a wedge between North and South. If on the other hand they preferred to concentrate in the South, leaving only a garrison in New York, they could overrun Virginia and Maryland and then the States farther south would give up a fight in which they were already beaten. Energy and enterprise, said Arnold, will quickly win the war.

In the autumn of 1780 the British cause did, indeed, seem near triumph. An election in England in October gave the ministry an increased majority and with this renewed determination.

When Holland, long a secret enemy, became an open one in December, 1780, Admiral Rodney descended on the Dutch island of St. Eustatius, in the West Indies, where the Americans were in the habit of buying great quantities of stores and on the 3d of February, 1781, captured the place with two hundred merchant ships, half a dozen men-of-war, and stores to the value of three million pounds. The capture cut off one chief source of supply to the United States. By January, 1781, a crisis in respect to money came to a head. Fierce mutinies broke out because there was no money to provide food, clothing, or pay for the army and the men were in a destitute condition. "These people are at the end of their resources," wrote Rochambeau in March. Arnold's treason, the halting voices in Congress, the disasters in the South, the British success in cutting off supplies of stores from St. Eustatius, the sordid problem of money — all these were well fitted to depress the worn leader so anxiously watching on the Hudson. It was the dark hour before the dawn.

## CHAPTER XI

### YORKTOWN

THE critical stroke of the war was near. In the South, after General Greene superseded Gates in the command, the tide of war began to turn. Cornwallis now had to fight a better general than Gates. Greene arrived at Charlotte, North Carolina, in December. He found an army badly equipped, wretchedly clothed, and confronted by a greatly superior force. He had, however, some excellent officers, and he did not scorn, as Gates, with the stiff military traditions of a regular soldier, had scorned, the aid of guerrilla leaders like Marion and Sumter. Serving with Greene was General Daniel Morgan, the enterprising and resourceful Virginia rifleman, who had fought valorously at Quebec, at Saratoga, and later in Virginia. Steuben was busy in Virginia holding the British in check and keeping open the line of communication with the North. The mobility and diversity of the



American forces puzzled Cornwallis. When he marched from Camden into North Carolina he hoped to draw Greene into a battle and to crush him as he had crushed Gates. He sent Tarleton with a smaller force to strike a deadly blow at Morgan who was threatening the British garrisons at the points in the interior farther south. There was no more capable leader than Tarleton; he had won many victories; but now came his day of defeat. On January 17, 1781, he met Morgan at the Cowpens, about thirty miles west from King's Mountain. Morgan, not quite sure of the discipline of his men, stood with his back to a broad river so that retreat was impossible. Tarleton had marched nearly all night over bad roads; but, confident in the superiority of his weary and hungry veterans, he advanced to the attack at daybreak. The result was a complete disaster. Tarleton himself barely got away with two hundred and seventy men and left behind nearly nine hundred casualties and prisoners.

Cornwallis had lost one-third of his effective army. There was nothing for him to do but to take his loss and still to press on northward in the hope that the more southerly inland posts could take care of themselves. In the early spring of 1781.

when heavy rains were making the roads difficult and the rivers almost impassable, Greene was luring Cornwallis northward and Cornwallis was chasing Greene. At Hillsborough, in the northwest corner of North Carolina, Cornwallis issued a proclamation saying that the colony was once more under the authority of the King and inviting the Loyalists, bullied and oppressed during nearly six years, to come out openly on the royal side. On the 15th of March Greene took a stand and offered battle at Guilford Court House. In the early afternoon, after a march of twelve miles without food, Cornwallis, with less than two thousand men, attacked Greene's force of about four thousand. By evening the British held the field and had captured Greene's guns. But they had lost heavily and they were two hundred miles from their base. Their friends were timid, and in fact few, and their numerous enemies were filled with passionate resolution.

Cornwallis now wrote to urge Clinton to come to his aid. Abandon New York, he said; bring the whole British force into Virginia and end the war by one smashing stroke; that would be better than sticking to salt pork in New York and sending only enough men to Virginia to steal tobacco.

Cornwallis could not remain where he was, far from the sea. Go back to Camden he would not after a victory, and thus seem to admit a defeat. So he decided to risk all and go forward. By hard marching he led his army down the Cape Fear River to Wilmington on the sea, and there he arrived on the 9th of April. Greene, however, simply would not do what Cornwallis wished — stay in the north to be beaten by a second smashing blow. He did what Cornwallis would not do; he marched back into the South and disturbed the British dream that now the country was held securely. It mattered little that, after this, the British won minor victories. Lord Rawdon, still holding Camden, defeated Greene on the 25th of April at Hobkirk's Hill. None the less did Rawdon find his position untenable and he, too, was forced to march to the sea, which he reached at a point near Charleston. Augusta, the capital of Georgia, fell to the Americans on the 5th of June and the operations of the summer went decisively in their favor. The last battle in the field of the farther South was fought on the 8th of September at Eutaw Springs, about fifty miles northwest of Charleston. The British held their position and thus could claim a victory. But it was fruitless.

They had been forced steadily to withdraw. All the boasted fabric of royal government in the South had come down with a crash and the Tories who had supported it were having evil days.

While these events were happening farther south, Cornwallis himself, without waiting for word from Clinton in New York, had adopted his own policy and marched from Wilmington northward into Virginia. Benedict Arnold was now in Virginia doing what mischief he could to his former friends. In January he burned the little town of Richmond, destined in the years to come to be a great center in another civil war. Some twenty miles south from Richmond lay in a strong position Petersburg, later also to be drenched with blood shed in civil strife. Arnold was already at Petersburg when Cornwallis arrived on the 20th of May. He was now in high spirits. He did not yet realize the extent of the failure farther south. Virginia he believed to be half loyalist at heart. The negroes would, he thought, turn against their masters when they knew that the British were strong enough to defend them. Above all he had a finely disciplined army of five thousand men. Cornwallis was the more confident when he knew by whom he was opposed. In April Washington had placed La

Fayette in charge of the defense of Virginia, and not only was La Fayette young and untried in such a command but he had at first only three thousand badly-trained men to confront the formidable British general. Cornwallis said cheerily that "the boy" was certainly now his prey and began the task of catching him.

An exciting chase followed. La Fayette did some good work. It was impossible, with his inferior force, to fight Cornwallis, but he could tire him out by drawing him into long marches. When Cornwallis advanced to attack La Fayette at Richmond, La Fayette was not there but had slipped away and was able to use rivers and mountains for his defense. Cornwallis had more than one string to his bow. The legislature of Virginia was sitting at Charlottesville, lying in the interior nearly a hundred miles northwest from Richmond, and Cornwallis conceived the daring plan of raiding Charlottesville, capturing the Governor of Virginia, Thomas Jefferson, and, at one stroke, shattering the civil administration. Tarleton was the man for such an enterprise of hard riding and bold fighting and he nearly succeeded. Jefferson indeed escaped by rapid flight but Tarleton took the town, burned the public records, and captured

ammunition and arms. But he really effected little. La Fayette was still unconquered. His army was growing and the British were finding that Virginia, like New England, was definitely against them.

At New York, meanwhile, Clinton was in a dilemma. He was dismayed at the news of the march of Cornwallis to Virginia. Cornwallis had been so long practically independent in the South that he assumed not only the right to shape his own policy but adopted a certain tartness in his despatches to Clinton, his superior. When now, in this tone, he urged Clinton to abandon New York and join him Clinton's answer on the 26th of June was a definite order to occupy some port in Virginia easily reached from the sea, to make it secure, and to send to New York reinforcements. The French army at Newport was beginning to move towards New York and Clinton had intercepted letters from Washington to La Fayette revealing a serious design to make an attack with the aid of the French fleet. Such was the game which fortune was playing with the British generals. Each desired the other to abandon his own plans and to come to his aid. They were agreed, however, that some strong point must be held in Virginia as a naval base, and on the 2d of August

Cornwallis established this base at Yorktown, at the mouth of the York River, a mile wide where it flows into Chesapeake Bay. His cannon could command the whole width of the river and keep in safety ships anchored above the town. Yorktown lay about half way between New York and Charleston and from here a fleet could readily carry a military force to any needed point on the sea. La Fayette with a growing army closed in on Yorktown, and Cornwallis, almost before he knew it, was besieged with no hope of rescue except by a fleet.

Then it was that from the sea, the restless and mysterious sea, came the final decision. Man seems so much the sport of circumstance that apparent trifles, remote from his consciousness, appear at times to determine his fate; it is a commonplace of romance that a pretty face or a stray bullet has altered the destiny not merely of families but of nations. And now, in the American Revolution, it was not forts on the Hudson, nor maneuvers in the South, that were to decide the issue, but the presence of a few more French warships than the British could muster at a given spot and time. Washington had urged in January that France should plan to have at least



temporary naval superiority in American waters, in accordance with Rochambeau's principle, "Nothing without naval supremacy." Washington wished to concentrate against New York, but the French were of a different mind, believing that the great effort should be made in Chesapeake Bay. There the British could have no defenses like those at New York, and the French fleet, which was stationed in the West Indies, could reach more readily than New York a point in the South.

Early in May Rochambeau knew that a French fleet was coming to his aid but not yet did he know where the stroke should be made. It was clear, however, that there was nothing for the French to do at Newport, and, by the beginning of June, Rochambeau prepared to set his army in motion. The first step was to join Washington on the Hudson and at any rate alarm Clinton as to an imminent attack on New York and hold him to that spot. After nearly a year of idleness the French soldiers were delighted that now at last there was to be an active movement. The long march from Newport to New York began. In glowing June, amid the beauties of nature, now overcome by intense heat and obliged to march at two o'clock in the morning, now drenched by heavy rains, the French plodded

on, and joined their American comrades along the Hudson early in July.

By the 14th of August Washington knew two things — that a great French fleet under the Comte de Grasse had sailed for the Chesapeake and that the British army had reached Yorktown. Soon the two allied armies, both lying on the east side of the Hudson, moved southward. On the 20th of August the Americans began to cross the river at King's Ferry, eight miles below Peekskill. Washington had to leave the greater part of his army before New York, and his meager force of some two thousand was soon over the river in spite of torrential rains. By the 24th of August the French, too, had crossed with some four thousand men and with their heavy equipment. The British made no move. Clinton was, however, watching these operations nervously. The united armies marched down the right bank of the Hudson so rapidly that they had to leave useful effects behind and some grumbled at the privation. Clinton thought his enemy might still attack New York from the New Jersey shore. He knew that near Staten Island the Americans were building great bakeries as if to feed an army besieging New York. Suddenly on the 29th of August the armies turned away

from New York southwestward across New Jersey, and still only the two leaders knew whither they were bound.

American patriotism has liked to dwell on this last great march of Washington. To him this was familiar country; it was here that he had harassed Clinton on the march from Philadelphia to New York three long years before. The French marched on the right at the rate of about fifteen miles a day. The country was beautiful and the roads were good. Autumn had come and the air was bracing. The peaches hung ripe on the trees. The Dutch farmers who, four years earlier, had been plaintive about the pillage by the Hessians, now seemed prosperous enough and brought abundance of provisions to the army. They had just gathered their harvest. The armies passed through Princeton, with its fine college, numbering as many as fifty students; then on to Trenton, and across the Delaware to Philadelphia, which the vanguard reached on the 3d of September.

There were gala scenes in Philadelphia. Twenty thousand people witnessed a review of the French army. To one of the French officers the city seemed "immense" with its seventy-two streets all "in a straight line." The shops appeared to be

equal to those of Paris and there were pretty women well dressed in the French fashion. The Quaker city forgot its old suspicion of the French and their Catholic religion. Luzerne, the French Minister, gave a great banquet on the evening of the 5th of September. Eighty guests took their places at table and as they sat down good news arrived. As yet few knew the destination of the army but now Luzerne read momentous tidings and the secret was out: twenty-eight French ships of the line had arrived in Chesapeake Bay; an army of three thousand men had already disembarked and was in touch with the army of La Fayette; Washington and Rochambeau were bound for Yorktown to attack Cornwallis. Great was the joy; in the streets the soldiers and the people shouted and sang and humorists, mounted on chairs, delivered in advance mock funeral orations on Cornwallis.

It was planned that the army should march the fifty miles to Elkton, at the head of Chesapeake Bay, and there take boat to Yorktown, two hundred miles to the south at the other end of the Bay. But there were not ships enough. Washington had asked the people of influence in the neighborhood to help him to gather transports but few of them

responded. A deadly apathy in regard to the war seems to have fallen upon many parts of the country. The Bay now in control of the French fleet was quite safe for unarmed ships. Half the Americans and some of the French embarked and the rest continued on foot. There was need of haste, and the troops marched on to Baltimore and beyond at the rate of twenty miles a day, over roads often bad and across rivers sometimes unbridged. At Baltimore some further regiments were taken on board transports and most of them made the final stages of the journey by water. Some there were, however, and among them the Vicomte de Noailles, brother-in-law of La Fayette, who tramped on foot the whole seven hundred and fifty-six miles from Newport to Yorktown. Washington himself left the army at Elkton and rode on with Rochambeau, making about sixty miles a day. Mount Vernon lay on the way and here Washington paused for two or three days. It was the first time he had seen it since he set out on May 4, 1775, to attend the Continental Congress at Philadelphia, little dreaming then of himself as chief leader in a long war. Now he pressed on to join La Fayette. By the end of the month an army of sixteen thousand men, of whom about one-half

were French, was besieging Cornwallis with seven thousand men in Yorktown.

Heart-stirring events had happened while the armies were marching to the South. The Comte de Grasse, with his great fleet, arrived at the entrance to the Chesapeake on the 30th of August while the British fleet under Admiral Graves still lay at New York. Grasse, now the pivot upon which everything turned, was the French admiral in the West Indies. Taking advantage of a lull in operations he had slipped away with his whole fleet, to make his stroke and be back again before his absence had caused great loss. It was a risky enterprise, but a wise leader takes risks. He intended to be back in the West Indies before the end of October.

It was not easy for the British to realize that they could be outmatched on the sea. Rodney had sent word from the West Indies that ten ships were the limit of Grasse's numbers and that even fourteen British ships would be adequate to meet him. A British fleet, numbering nineteen ships of the line, commanded by Admiral Graves, left New York on the 31st of August and five days later stood off the entrance to Chesapeake Bay. On the mainland across the Bay lay Yorktown, the

one point now held by the British on that great stretch of coast. When Graves arrived he had an unpleasant surprise. The strength of the French had been well concealed. There to confront him lay twenty-four enemy ships. The situation was even worse, for the French fleet from Newport was on its way to join Grasse.

On the afternoon of the 5th of September, the day of the great rejoicing in Philadelphia, there was a spectacle of surpassing interest off Cape Henry, at the mouth of the Bay. The two great fleets joined battle, under sail, and poured their fire into each other. When night came the British had about three hundred and fifty casualties and the French about two hundred. There was no brilliant leadership on either side. One of Graves's largest ships, the *Terrible*, was so crippled that he burnt her, and several others were badly damaged. Admiral Hood, one of Graves's officers, says that if his leader had turned suddenly and anchored his ships across the mouth of the Bay, the French Admiral with his fleet outside would probably have sailed away and left the British fleet in possession. As it was the two fleets lay at sea in sight of each other for four days. On the morning of the tenth the squadron from Newport under Barras arrived



and increased Grasse's ships to thirty-six. Against such odds Graves could do nothing. He lingered near the mouth of the Chesapeake for a few days still and then sailed away to New York to refit. At the most critical hour of the whole war a British fleet, crippled and spiritless, was hurrying to a protecting port and the fleurs-de-lis waved unchallenged on the American coast. The action of Graves spelled the doom of Cornwallis. The most potent fleet ever gathered in those waters cut him off from rescue by sea.

Yorktown fronted on the York River with a deep ravine and swamps at the back of the town. From the land it could on the west side be approached by a road leading over marshes and easily defended, and on the east side by solid ground about half a mile wide now protected by redoubts and entrenchments with an outer and an inner parallel. Could Cornwallis hold out? At New York, no longer in any danger, there was still a keen desire to rescue him. By the end of September he received word from Clinton that reinforcements had arrived from England and that, with a fleet of twenty-six ships of the line carrying five thousand troops, he hoped to sail on the 5th of October to the rescue of Yorktown. There was delay. Later Clinton wrote that

on the basis of assurances from Admiral Graves he hoped to get away on the twelfth. A British officer in New York describes the hopes with which the populace watched these preparations. The fleet, however, did not sail until the 19th of October. A speaker in Congress at the time said that the British Admiral should certainly hang for this delay.

On the 5th of October, for some reason unexplained, Cornwallis abandoned the outer parallel and withdrew behind the inner one. This left him in Yorktown a space so narrow that nearly every part of it could be swept by enemy artillery. By the 11th of October shells were dropping incessantly from a distance of only three hundred yards, and before this powerful fire the earthworks crumbled. On the fourteenth the French and Americans carried by storm two redoubts on the second parallel. The redoubtable Tarleton was in Yorktown, and he says that day and night there was acute danger to any one showing himself and that every gun was dismounted as soon as seen. He was for evacuating the place and marching away, whither he hardly knew. Cornwallis still held Gloucester, on the opposite side of the York River, and he now planned to cross to that place with his best troops, leaving behind his sick and

wounded. He would try to reach Philadelphia by the route over which Washington had just ridden. The feat was not impossible. Washington would have had a stern chase in following Cornwallis, who might have been able to live off the country. Clinton could help by attacking Philadelphia, which was almost defenseless.

As it was, a storm prevented the crossing to Gloucester. The defenses of Yorktown were weakening and in face of this new discouragement the British leader made up his mind that the end was near. Tarleton and other officers condemned Cornwallis sharply for not persisting in the effort to get away. Cornwallis was a considerate man. "I thought it would have been wanton and inhuman," he reported later, "to sacrifice the lives of this small body of gallant soldiers." He had already written to Clinton to say that there would be great risk in trying to send a fleet and army to rescue him. On the 19th of October came the climax. Cornwallis surrendered with some hundreds of sailors and about seven thousand soldiers, of whom two thousand were in hospital. The terms were similar to those which the British had granted at Charleston to General Lincoln, who was now charged with carrying out the surrender.

Such is the play of human fortune. At two o'clock in the afternoon the British marched out between two lines, the French on the one side, the Americans on the other, the French in full dress uniform, the Americans in some cases half naked and bare-foot. No civilian sightseers were admitted, and there was a respectful silence in the presence of this great humiliation to a proud army. The town itself was a dreadful spectacle with, as a French observer noted, "big holes made by bombs, cannon balls, splinters, barely covered graves, arms and legs of blacks and whites scattered here and there, most of the houses riddled with shot and devoid of window-panes."

On the very day of surrender Clinton sailed from New York with a rescuing army. Nine days later forty-four British ships were counted off the entrance to Chesapeake Bay. The next day there were none. The great fleet had heard of the surrender and had turned back to New York. Washington urged Grasse to attack New York or Charleston but the French Admiral was anxious to take his fleet back to meet the British menace farther south and he sailed away with all his great array. The waters of the Chesapeake, the scene of one of the decisive events in human history,

were deserted by ships of war. Grasse had sailed, however, to meet a stern fate. He was a fine fighting sailor. His men said of him that he was on ordinary days six feet in height but on battle days six feet and six inches. None the less did a few months bring the British a quick revenge on the sea. On April 12, 1782, Rodney met Grasse in a terrible naval battle in the West Indies. Some five thousand in both fleets perished. When night came Grasse was Rodney's prisoner and Britain had recovered her supremacy on the sea. On returning to France Grasse was tried by court-martial and, though acquitted, he remained in disgrace until he died in 1788, "weary," as he said, "of the burden of life." The defeated Cornwallis was not blamed in England. His character commanded wide respect and he lived to play a great part in public life. He became Governor General of India, and was Viceroy of Ireland when its restless union with England was brought about in 1800.

Yorktown settled the issue of the war but did not end it. For more than a year still hostilities continued and, in parts of the South, embittered faction led to more bloodshed. In England the

news of Yorktown caused a commotion. When Lord George Germain received the first despatch he drove with one or two colleagues to the Prime Minister's house in Downing Street. A friend asked Lord George how Lord North had taken the news. "As he would have taken a ball in the breast," he replied; "for he opened his arms, exclaiming wildly, as he paced up and down the apartment during a few minutes, 'Oh God! it is all over,' words which he repeated many times, under emotions of the deepest agitation and distress." Lord North might well be agitated for the news meant the collapse of a system. The King was at Kew and word was sent to him. That Sunday evening Lord George Germain had a small dinner party and the King's letter in reply was brought to the table. The guests were curious to know how the King took the news. "The King writes just as he always does," said Lord George, "except that I observe he has omitted to mark the hour and the minute of his writing with his usual precision." It needed a heavy shock to disturb the routine of George III. The King hoped no one would think that the bad news "makes the smallest alteration in those principles of my conduct which have directed me in past time." Lesser men might

change in the face of evils; George III was resolved to be changeless and never, never, to yield to the coercion of facts.

Yield, however, he did. The months which followed were months of political commotion in England. For a time the ministry held its majority against the fierce attacks of Burke and Fox. The House of Commons voted that the war must go on. But the heart had gone out of British effort. Everywhere the people were growing restless. Even the ministry acknowledged that the war in America must henceforth be defensive only. In February, 1782, a motion in the House of Commons for peace was lost by only one vote; and in March, in spite of the frantic expostulations of the King, Lord North resigned. The King insisted that at any rate some members of the new ministry must be named by himself and not, as is the British constitutional custom, by the Prime Minister. On this, too, he had to yield; and a Whig ministry, under the Marquis of Rockingham, took office in March, 1782. Rockingham died on the 1st of July, and it was Lord Shelburne, later the Marquis of Lansdowne, under whom the war came to an end. The King meanwhile declared that he would return to Hanover rather than yield the independence



of the colonies. Over and over again he had said that no one should hold office in his government who would not pledge himself to keep the Empire entire. But even his obstinacy was broken. On December 5, 1782, he opened Parliament with a speech in which the right of the colonies to independence was acknowledged. "Did I lower my voice when I came to that part of my speech?" George asked afterwards. He might well speak in a subdued tone for he had brought the British Empire to the lowest level in its history.

In America, meanwhile, the glow of victory had given way to weariness and lassitude. Rochambeau with his army remained in Virginia. Washington took his forces back to the lines before New York, sparing what men he could to help Greene in the South. Again came a long period of watching and waiting. Washington, knowing the obstinate determination of the British character, urged Congress to keep up the numbers of the army so as to be prepared for any emergency. Sir Guy Carleton now commanded the British at New York and Washington feared that this capable Irishman might soothe the Americans into a false security. He had to speak sharply, for the people seemed indifferent to further effort and Congress was slack

and impotent. The outlook for Washington's allies in the war darkened, when in April, 1782, Rodney won his crushing victory and carried De Grasse a prisoner to England. France's ally Spain had been besieging Gibraltar for three years, but in September, 1782, when the great battering-ships specially built for the purpose began a furious bombardment, which was expected to end the siege, the British defenders destroyed every ship, and after that Gibraltar was safe. These events naturally stiffened the backs of the British in negotiating peace. Spain declared that she would never make peace without the surrender of Gibraltar, and she was ready to leave the question of American independence undecided or decided against the colonies if she could only get for herself the terms which she desired. There was a period when France seemed ready to make peace on the basis of dividing the Thirteen States, leaving some of them independent while others should remain under the British King.

Congress was not willing to leave its affairs at Paris in the capable hands of Franklin alone. In 1780 it sent John Adams to Paris, and John Jay and Henry Laurens were also members of the American Commission. The austere Adams disliked

and was jealous of Franklin, gay in spite of his years, seemingly indolent and easygoing, always bland and reluctant to say No to any request from his friends, but ever astute in the interests of his country. Adams told Vergennes, the French foreign minister, that the Americans owed nothing to France, that France had entered the war in her own interests, and that her alliance with America had greatly strengthened her position in Europe. France, he added, was really hostile to the colonies, since she was jealously trying to keep them from becoming rich and powerful. Adams dropped hints that America might be compelled to make a separate peace with Britain. When it was proposed that the depreciated continental paper money, largely held in France for purchases there, should be redeemed at the rate of one good dollar for every forty in paper money, Adams declared to the horrified French creditors of the United States that the proposal was fair and just. At the same time Congress was drawing on Franklin in Paris for money to meet its requirements and Franklin was expected to persuade the French treasury to furnish him with what he needed and to an amazing degree succeeded in doing so. The self interest which Washington believed to be the dominant

motive in politics was, it is clear, actively at work. In the end the American Commissioners negotiated directly with Great Britain, without asking for the consent of their French allies. On November 30, 1782, articles of peace between Great Britain and the United States were signed. They were, however, not to go into effect until Great Britain and France had agreed upon terms of peace; and it was not until September 3, 1783, that the definite treaty was signed. So far as the United States was concerned Spain was left quite properly to shift for herself.

Thus it was that the war ended. Great Britain had urged especially the case of the Loyalists, the return to them of their property and compensation for their losses. She could not achieve anything. Franklin indeed asked that Americans who had been ruined by the destruction of their property should be compensated by Britain, that Canada should be added to the United States, and that Britain should acknowledge her fault in distressing the colonies. In the end the American Commissioners agreed to ask the individual States to meet the desires of the British negotiators, but both sides understood that the States would do nothing, that the confiscated property would never be

returned, that most of the exiled Loyalists would remain exiles, and that Britain herself must compensate them for their losses. This in time she did on a scale inadequate indeed but expressive of a generous intention. The United States retained the great Northwest and the Mississippi became the western frontier, with destiny already whispering that weak and grasping Spain must soon let go of the farther West stretching to the Pacific Ocean. When Great Britain signed peace with France and Spain in January, 1783, Gibraltar was not returned; Spain had to be content with the return of Minorca and Florida which she had been forced to yield to Britain in 1763. Each side restored its conquests in the West Indies. France, the chief mainstay of the war during its later years, gained from it really nothing beyond the weakening of her ancient enemy. The magnanimity of France, especially towards her exacting American ally, is one of the fine things in the great combat. The huge sum of nearly eight hundred million dollars spent by France in the war was one of the chief factors in the financial crisis which, six years after the signing of the peace, brought on the French Revolution and with it the overthrow of the Bourbon monarchy. Politics bring strange

bedfellows and they have rarely brought stranger ones than the democracy of young America and the political despotism, linked with idealism, of the ancient monarchy of France.

The British did not evacuate New York until Carleton had gathered there the Loyalists who claimed his protection. These unhappy people made their way to the seaports, often after long and distressing journeys overland. Charleston was the chief rallying place in the South and from there many sad-hearted people sailed away, never to see again their former homes. The British had captured New York in September, 1776, and it was more than seven years later, on November 25, 1783, that the last of the British fleet put to sea. Britain and America had broken forever their political tie and for many years to come embittered memories kept up the alienation.

It was fitting that Washington should bid farewell to his army at New York, the center of his hopes and anxieties during the greater part of the long struggle. On December 4, 1783, his officers met at a tavern to bid him farewell. The tears ran down his cheeks as he parted with these brave and tried men. He shook their hands in silence and, in a fashion still preserved in France, kissed each

of them. Then they watched him as he was rowed away in his barge to the New Jersey shore. Congress was now sitting at Annapolis in Maryland and there on December 23, 1783, Washington appeared and gave up finally his command. We are told that the members sat covered to show the sovereignty of the Union, a quaint touch of the thought of the time. The little town made a brave show and "the gallery was filled with a beautiful group of elegant ladies." With solemn sincerity Washington commended the country to the protection of Almighty God and the army to the special care of Congress. Passion had already subsided for the President of Congress in his reply praised the "magnanimous king and nation" of Great Britain. By the end of the year Washington was at Mount Vernon, hoping now to be able, as he said simply, to make and sell a little flour annually and to repair houses fast going to ruin. He did not foresee the troubled years and the vexing problems which still lay before him. Nor could he, in his modest estimate of himself, know that for a distant posterity his character and his words would have compelling authority. What Washington's countryman, Motley, said of William of Orange is true of Washington himself: "As long as he lived he was the guiding



star of a brave nation and when he died the little children cried in the streets." But this is not all. To this day in the domestic and foreign affairs of the United States the words of Washington, the policies which he favored, have a living and almost binding force. This attitude of mind is not without its dangers, for nations require to make new adjustments of policy, and the past is only in part the master of the present; but it is the tribute of a grateful nation to the noble character of its chief founder.

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